FORREST'S HISTORY OF THE TRINITY

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SOME ACCOUNT

OF

THE ORIGIN AND PROGRESS

OF

TRINITARIAN THEOLOGY,

IN THE

Second, Third, and succeeding Centuries,

AND OF THE MANNER IN WHICH ITS DOCTRINES GRADUALLY SUPPLANTED THE

UNITARIANISM OF THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH.

COMPILED FROM THE WORKS OF VARIOUS THEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL WRITERS.

By JAMES FORREST, A. M.

TENTH AMERICAN EDITION.

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PREFACE

TO THE

SECOND AMERICAN EDITION.

The following work was unknown to the writer of these lines until a few years ago, when a copy, in the original pamphlet form, fell into his possession amid some waste paper. He republished it in an edition of six or seven hundred copies, which has been exhausted.

The author, it will be noticed, uses the term Unitarian in a restricted sense, which it has never attained among Unitarians in this country, as denoting a believer in the divine mission of Christ who does not believe his pre-existence. In this sense Channing was not a Unitarian, and in this sense many of the early Christians might be excluded from the name, who in our own community would be reckoned very stanch ones. This restricted sense has to some extent prevailed among English Unitarians,* with whom the line of demarcation be-

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* Belsham, in his "Calm Inquiry" (p. 314, edit. of 1817), affirms that "to the title of Unitarians the advocates of simple pre-existence ..... have an unquestionable right." But the affirmation implies that they were not in undisputed enjoyment of that right, and on page 308 of the same edition

tween such as did and such as did not believe the pre-existence was, formerly at least, much sharper than in this country.

Mr. Forrest defends himself at page 97 for extending the Semi-Trinitarian period so as to include Athanasius. Yet if fault can justly be found with any MAIN point in his history, that fault would be an opposite one in the period mentioned; not, namely, that he continued it too far, but that he begins it too early. From the middle of the second until the end of the third century, the belief of most Fathers might be termed Dualism, — a belief in two Gods; but the term Semi-Trinitarian seems illy to designate a period in which not more than two or three writers * knew anything of the Holy Spirit as a third and distinct personage in a Trinity, and in which a large portion — or, if Tertullian's statement on pages 34, 35 be not too strong, the majority — of Christians did not believe the deity of Christ. On page 12, moreover, is a statement, which, as regards the ascription of divinity to the Holy Spirit, must be modified by information and statements on pages 39 – 41. The removal of these errors will strengthen instead of weakening Mr. Forrest's argument.

Had the writer of this Preface originated the following work, its plan would have been purely historical, omitting what pertains to exposition of the New Testament, and both in plan and execution it would have differed from the present

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he alludes to "the outcry which has of late years been raised against the advocates for the proper humanity of Jesus Christ, for having appropriated to themselves the honorable title of Unitarians."

* Hagenbach, in his Doctrinal History (2d edit. Vol. I. § 44, note 5), quotes Tertullian and Origen only as holding this view.

one. He is unacquainted, however, with any work which condenses into the same compass an equal amount of reliable evidence as to the non-Trinitarianism and anti-Trinitarianism of the early centuries.

On some collateral points Mr. Forrest's conclusions are more open to question than on his main one, and an inexperienced reader should, perhaps, be cautioned that, in this or in any other work on a particular subject, unless written by a person unusually accurate in his habits of language, statements which are perfectly correct as to the point at issue, must not be deemed equally correct when applied in a manner not thought of by the author. The Ebionites, for instance, were Unitarians in that they rejected the doctrine of Christ's deity, but in other respects their counterpart would have to be sought in almost any other denomination rather than among Unitarians.

No alterations from the original edition have been made in this, save the addition of an Index, Table of Contents, headings to the pages, the substitution on page 33 of "sufferings," as a translation less liable to be misunderstood than "passions," and the addition of a note to the Table containing the Three Creeds. The paging of the original edition has been inserted in black letter.

F. H.

Meadville, Pa., August 28, 1856.

TABLE OF CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

OF THE THREE CREEDS OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, VIZ. THE APOSTLES' CREED, THE NICENE CREED, AND THE ATHANASIAN CREED, AS THE PROOF OF A GRADUAL CHANGE OF OPINION FROM UNITARIANISM TO TRINITARIANISM, IN THE EARLY CENTURIES OF THE CHURCH.

	PAGE
General Statement	1
1. The Apostles' or Unitarian Creed	1
2. The Nicene or Semi-Trinitarian Creed	4
3. The Athanasian or Trinitarian Creed	7
The Two Natures in Christ. Trinitarianism perfected	10

CHAPTER II.

THIS PROOF OF PROGRESSIVE CHANGE CONFIRMED BY QUOTATIONS FROM THE WORKS OF THE THEOLOGICAL WRITERS OF ANTIQUITY.

General Statement	12
1. Unitarian Period	12
Clement of Rome	13
Polycarp	16
2. Semi-Trinitarian Period	17
Justin Martyr	18
Irenæus	19
Clement of Alexandria	21
Tertullian	21
Origen	23

Novatian 24
Arnobius 25
Lactantius 25
Eusebius 26
Athanasius 27
3. Trinitarian Period 29
Augustine or Austin 29
Basil 30
Gregory of Nazianzen 30
Jerome 30
Chrysostom 30
Theodoret 31
Pope Damasus 31

CHAPTER III.

OF THE OPPOSITION WHICH WAS MADE AT DIFFERENT TIMES TO THE INTRODUCTION AND SPREAD OF TRINITARIANISM.

[SECTION I.]

General Statement 32
Evidence from Justin Martyr 32
" " Tertullian 34
" " Origen 36
" " Athanasius 39
Other Evidence of Opposition to the Deification of Christ from Origen and Novatian 39
Eusebius 40
Comparative Absence before the Fourth Century of any Discussion concerning the Holy Spirit 41
Evidence of Opposition to the Distinct Deification of the Spirit from Basil 41
Gregory of Nazianzen 42

[SECTION II.]

Leaders and Advocates of Unitarianism.

1. Their Common Principle 43
2. Their Division into Two Classes 43
3. Their Agreement in the Interpretation of the Introduction to John's Gospel 44
Account of them in their Chronological Order: —
Artemon and Theodotus, A. D. 192 44
Praxeas, A. D. 196 47

Noetus, A. D. 230, and Sabellius, A. D. 260 47
Paul of Samosata, A. D. 260 48
Marcellus, A. D. 330 49
Photinus, A. D. 344 50
Bonosus, ... 51

CHAPTER IV.

OF THE PRINCIPAL SOURCE OF TRINITARIANISM [OR RATHER, OF THE DOCTRINE OF CHRIST'S DEITY], AS ALLEGED BY VARIOUS ANCIENT FATHERS, VIZ. THE WRITINGS OF THE APOSTLE JOHN.

General Statement 51

SECTION I. — *St. John's Gospel.*

Views concerning it, of Origen 52
" " " Epiphanius 53
" " " Ambrose 53
" " " Jerome 53
" " " Augustine or Austin 53
" " " Chrysostom 54
" " " Paulinus 55
" " " Theophylact 55
Why St. John was called the Divine 55
Interpretation of John's Introduction 56
1. As teaching the Dignity of Christ 57
Views of Praxeas, Noetus, Sabellius, Paul of Samosata, Marcellus, and Photinus 60
2. As directed against a Pernicious Philosophy 61

SECTION II. — *First Epistle of John.*

Interpretation of the Epistle 64
Spuriousness of 1 John v. 7 70

CHAPTER V.

OF THE REAL SOURCES OF TRINITARIANISM, AND, IN PARTICULAR, THE INFLUENCE OF THE GREEK PHILOSOPHY ON THE MINDS OF SPECULATING CHRISTIAN WRITERS.

[SECTION I.]

Source 1. A Vague Admiration of Christ 71
And False Shame at being Disciples of a Crucified Man 72

[Section II.]

Source 2. The Influence of the Greek Philosophy . . . 74
This Latter Origin of the Trinity confirmed by the Fact that no Jewish Christians believed the Doctrine of Christ's Deity . 80
1. Jewish Separatists under the Name of Ebionites . . . 82
Testimony of Irenæus 84
" " Tertullian 85
" " Origen 86
" " Eusebius 88
2. Jewish Separatists under the Names of Ebionites and Nazarenes 89
Evidence from Epiphanius 90
" " Jerome 92
" " Augustine and Ambrose 93
" " Theodoret 94

Supplementary Notes 97
Index 103

CHARTS.

I. The Three Creeds . . . . . Facing page 1
II. Introduction of John's Gospel . . . . " " 56
III. Spuriousness of 1 John v. 7 . . . . " " 70
IV. Nazarenes and Ebionites . . . . . " " 81

THE THREE CREEDS OF T

TAKEN FROM THE BOO

The Apostles', or Unitarian Creed: Being the Creed of the two first Christian centuries.	**The Nicene, or Semi-Trinitarian Creed:** Principally drawn up by the Council of Nice in A.D. 325; the clause concerning the Holy Ghost in brackets [ ] having been affixed to it by the Council of Constantinople, in A.D. 381, except the words [and the Son], which were afterwards introduced into it.	Long ascribed to
I believe in **God,** the **Father Almighty,** Maker of heaven and earth:	I believe in **One God,** the **Father A[lmighty,** Maker of heaven and earth; and of all things visible and invisible.	Whosoever wi faith except ever
And in Jesus Christ, his only Son our Lord: who was conceived by the holy ghost (spirit), born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell (the grave); the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of **God,** the **Father Almighty:** From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead:	And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God; begotten of his Father before all worlds; God of (or from) **God;** Light of (or from) **Light;** Very God of (or from) **Very God;** begotten, not made; being of one substance with the Father; by whom all things were made; who for us men, and for our salvation, came down from heaven; and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the virgin Mary; and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate; he suffered, and was buried, and the third day he rose again, according to the Scriptures; and ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of the **Father:** and he shall come again with glory to judge both the quick and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end.	And the Cath **in Unity;** n son of the **Fat** head of the Fath eternal. Such a create, the Son incomprehensibl and the Holy Gh not three incomp So likewise the they are not th the Holy Ghost is Lord, the Son like as we are c God and Lord; three Lords. T Father alone, no neither made no one Son, not th afore or after a eternal together, and the **Trini** think of the **Tr**
I believe in the holy ghost (spirit); the holy catholic (general) Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.	And I believe in the Holy Ghost, [the Lord and Giver of life; who proceedeth from the Father [and the Son]; who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified; who spake by the prophets].	Furthermore, of our Lord Jesu Christ, the Son worlds; and ma man; of a reasc head; and infer yet is he not tw of the manhood For as the reas our salvation; heaven, he sitte judge the quick give account fo and they that h believe faithfull Ghost. As it v
	And I believe one catholic and apostolic church: I acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins: and I look for the resurrection of the dead; and the life of the world to come. Amen.	

"The three Creeds, Nicene Creed, Athanasius's Creed, and that which is commonly cal by most certain warrants of Holy Scripture."— Article VIII. of the Church of England: t the United States of America, Article VIII. reads as follows: "The Nicene Creed, and th for they may be proved by most certain warrants of Scripture."— F. H.]

To face page 1.

The Athanasian, or Trinitarian Creed :

nasius, a theologian of the fourth century, but now generally allowed not to have been composed until the fifth century, by some other person.

saved, before all things it is necessary that he hold the Catholic Faith ; which e do keep whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly.
Faith is this : that we worship **One God in Trinity,** and **Trinity** confounding the Persons nor dividing the substance. For there is one per-, another of the **Son,** and another of the **Holy Ghost.** But the God-f the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, is all one ; the glory equal, the majesty co-e Father is, such is the Son, and such is the Holy Ghost : the Father un-reate, and the Holy Ghost uncreate · the Father incomprehensible, the Son d the Holy Ghost incomprehensible : the Father eternal, the Son eternal, ternal ; and yet they are not three eternals, but one eternal. As also there are nsibles, nor three uncreated ; but one uncreated, and one incomprehensible. er is Almighty, the Son Almighty, and the Holy Ghost Almighty ; and yet lmighties, but one Almighty So the Father is God, the Son is God, and od ; and yet they are not three Gods, but one God. So likewise the Father d, and the Holy Ghost Lord ; and yet not three Lords, but one Lord. For elled by the Christian verity to acknowledge every person by himself to be re we forbidden by the Catholic religion to say, There be three Gods, or ather is made of none, neither created nor begotten. The Son is of the le nor created, but begotten. The Holy Ghost is of the Father and of the Son ; ated nor begotten, but proceeding So there is one Father, not three Fathers ; ons ; one Holy Ghost, not three Holy Ghosts. And in this Trinity none is r, none is greater or less than another ; but the whole three persons are co- co-equal. So that in all things, as is aforesaid, the **Unity in Trinity,** **Unity,** is to be worshipped. He, therefore, that will be saved, must thus

y.

necessary to everlasting salvation, that he also believe rightly the incarnation rist. For the right faith is, that we believe and confess that our Lord Jesus od, is God and man ; God of the substance of the Father, begotten before the the substance of his mother, born in the world ; perfect God, and perfect soul and human flesh subsisting ; equal to the Father, as touching his God- the Father, as touching his manhood ; who, although he be God and man, one Christ ; one, not by conversion of the Godhead into flesh, but by taking God. One altogether, not by confusion of substance, but by unity of person. soul and flesh is one man, so God and man is one Christ : who suffered for nded into hell, rose again the third day from the dead ; he ascended into the right hand of the Father, God Almighty, from whence he shall come to ne dead ; at whose coming all men shall rise again with their bodies, and shall own works. And they that have done good shall go into life everlasting ; ne evil, into everlasting fire. This is the Catholic faith, which except a man cannot be saved. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Apostles' Creed, ought thoroughly to be received and believed ; for they may be proved om the Book of Common Prayer. [In the Articles of the Protestant Episcopal Church in ch is commonly called the Apostles' Creed, ought thoroughly to be received and believed ;

CHAPTER I.

Of the Three Creeds of the Church of England, viz. the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, and the Athanasian Creed, as the Proof of a gradual Change of Opinion from Unitarianism to Trinitarianism, in the early Centuries of the Church.

Protestants do not doubt that many doctrines and practices of the Roman Catholic Church, having no authority from Scripture, must have crept into existence, at times, subsequent to the Apostolic age. I believe that the doctrine of a Trinity of persons in the Godhead, and that of a union of two natures in Jesus Christ, had a similar origin. I think that they formed no part of primitive Christianity, but were slowly, and step after step, introduced among its principles, during the second, third, and succeeding centuries. It is proposed in these pages to produce the evidence which supports this opinion. My design will be to show at what times, and under what circumstances, Trinitarian notions were first held, how they gradually spread, what resistance they encountered, the ground on which they were defended, and the causes of their conception.

A review of the three Creeds of the Churches of Rome and England will form an introduction to this subject; for they distinctly indicate a gradual change of opinion from the simplicity of the Gospel to the complex system of Trinitarianism. The first Creed is *Unitarian;* the second is *partly* so; the third and last contains *Trinitarianism* in its boldest and most complicated state. As two of these Creeds were originally drawn up to be public Confessions, and as the third, though at first it was private, was afterwards made common, they are worthy, on this account, to be attentively considered. In this chapter I intend to explain them, in the order in which they stand.

I. The Creed bearing the name of the *Apostles'* was gen-

erally thought, from the fourth century downwards, for many hundred years, to have been composed by the twelve chosen followers of our Saviour.* But for several reasons this opinion has been abandoned. Still, however, the great antiquity of the Creed cannot be reasonably doubted, or that it is a work of nearly apostolical importance.† Irenæus, one of the disciples second in succession after John, has been justly thought to refer to it when he speaks [p. 8] of that *Faith*, or *Rule of Truth*, which the churches, though scattered over the earth, had received, and into which all believers were baptized, on acknowledging Christianity.‡ The copy, indeed, which this Father has quoted differs considerably from that now generally known. But this has been explained by supposing that Irenæus did not so much intend to give the form itself as a commentary on it, since in another part of his writings we find a different version of it, or rather a different commentary on the same Creed. §

It appears that this form of faith was not at first committed to paper, but was used *orally* in the churches before baptism. ‖ In consequence of this, it is probable that it varied, in different places, in *words*, though not in *substance*, and that some additions also have been made to it since its first employment. ¶ Afterwards, when copies in writing had been taken of it, they were read before congregations as a part of the public worship.**

With these provisions, we may admit, I think, this Creed as a monument, in some measure, of the faith of the first era of Christianity.

"The Christian system," says Dr. Mosheim, "as it was hitherto taught (referring to the primitive age), preserved its native and beautiful simplicity, and was comprehended in a small number of articles. The public teachers inculcated no other doctrines than those that are contained in what is com-

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* King's History of the Apostles' Creed, 4th ed., p. 25.

† Ibid., p. 30. Bingham's Antiquities of the Christian Church, Vol. IV. p. 82.

‡ Irenæus, Lib. I. c. 2. p. 45. Apud Dr. Priestley's History of Early Opinions concerning Christ, Vol. I. pp. 306, 307, see also Bingham's Antiquities, Vol. IV. p. 84.

§ Dr. Priestley's History of Early Opinions, Vol. I. pp. 305, 308.

‖ King's History of the Creed, p. 32.

¶ Bingham's Antiquities, Vol. IV. pp. 75, 82.

** King's History, p. 43.

monly called the Apostles' Creed; and in the method of illustrating them, all vain subtleties, all mysterious researches, everything that was beyond the reach of common capacities, were carefully avoided. This will by no means appear surprising to those who consider that, at this time, there was not the least controversy about those capital doctrines of Christianity which were afterwards so keenly debated in the Church; and who reflect that the bishops of those primitive times were, for the most part, plain and illiterate men, remarkable rather for their piety and zeal than for their learning and eloquence." *

What, then, are the doctrines of the Apostles' Creed? Are we recommended by it to believe in a three-one God, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost? No; but in God the Father only: "*I believe in* GOD, THE FATHER ALMIGHTY, *Maker of heaven and earth.*" What are we to acknowledge concerning Christ? — that he was co-eternal with the Father? co-equal with him? like him, Almighty, and the Maker of heaven and earth? No; but we are instructed to believe "*in Jesus Christ, his* [p. 9] *only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost* (*Spirit*), *born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried, he descended into hell* (*the grave*), *the third day he arose again from the dead, he ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of* GOD, THE FATHER ALMIGHTY, *from whence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.*" Are we taught in this Creed the divinity of the Holy Ghost? No; for this portion of the Trinity is not even mentioned as a *person*, but only as a *thing*, being classed with a number of other *things* at the end of the Creed: "*I believe in the Holy Ghost* (*Spirit*), *the Holy Catholic* (*general*) *Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.*"

This form of faith is entirely silent about a Trinity in unity, an incarnate deity, a union of opposite natures in Christ, or any of those phrases and doctrines of Trinitarian divinity so common and so fashionable in after times. It can only be regarded as an Unitarian compilation, the work of an Unitarian age, when men were yet ignorant of the mysteries and subtleties which afterwards appeared. †

* Dr Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History, Vol. I. p 183.

† The Unitarianism of the Apostles' Creed has sometimes been admitted and lamented by Trinitarians. The following curious specimen

II. It was soon found, when the leaders of the Church began to advance towards Trinitarianism, that the Apostles' Creed was insufficient to express the new opinions which began to be entertained. Other forms, therefore, were afterwards drawn up, as more aptly expressive of the *growing* sentiments [p. 10] of the times. And though all of these were, ostensibly, only explanations * of the Symbol (as the Apostles' Creed was distinctively called),† we know from history, that much less importance was attached to *it* than to *them*, *they* only being thought, as they successively appeared, to be adequate representations of theology. The chief of these instruments in the fourth century was the Creed now known as the *Nicene;* so called because the greater part of it was drawn up by a general council held at Nice, in Bithynia, A. D. 325.‡ The part of it which explains the divinity of the Holy Ghost was added by a general council, held at Constantinople, A. D. 381,§ with the exception of the clause "*and the Son*," which the Latin Church affixed to it in the ninth century.‖ This last

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is given by Mr. Lindsey, in his "Apology for resigning the Vicarage of Catterick in Yorkshire." It forms part of the angry criticism which some English and Spanish Jesuits passed upon this Creed, and is translated from a Latin work by Alphonsus de Vargas, a Spaniard. "*I believe in the Holy Ghost.* This proposition is put with a bad design, and is deservedly suspected for its affected brevity, for it craftily passes over in silence the divinity of the Holy Ghost, and his proceeding from the Father and the Son. Moreover, it smells grievously of Arian heresy, covertly favors the schisms of the Greeks, and destroys the undivided Trinity. And the whole of this exposition of the divine and undivided Trinity, contained in these eight articles [viz the Apostles' Creed so divided], is defective and dangerous; for it takes the faithful off from the worship and reverence undividedly and inseparably to be paid to the three Divine persons; and under a pretence of brevity, and making no unnecessary enlargement, it cunningly overthrows the whole mystery of the Trinity, whereof the perfect and explicit belief is an indispensable condition of salvation. So that this whole doctrine [viz. the Apostles' Creed] can hardly be looked upon as any other than a cheat, because it maketh no mention of the divinity of the Son, or Holy Ghost, or their eternity, but even intimates the contrary concerning the Son, in the third article, viz. *who was conceived of the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary.*" Lindsey's Apology, 4th edition, pp. 123–126.

* Judgment of the Fathers, p. 21, in Vol. III. of old Unitarian Tracts, A. D. 1695.

† King's History, p. 6. Bingham's Antiquities, Vol. IV. p 64.

‡ Mosheim, Ecc. Hist., Vol. I. p. 414. Dr Jortin's Remarks on Ecc Hist., Vol II. p. 66.

§ Mosheim, Vol. I. p. 426. ‖ Jortin, Vol. III. p. 62

clause the Greek Church never adopted: she separated from the Latin communion, among other reasons, on account of it, denouncing its inventors and supporters as heretics.*

The Nicene Creed is *semi-Trinitarian.* It retains in part the spirit of Unitarianism; but in part it approaches the complex Athanasian system. Its first article is an expressive testimony to the supremacy of the Father: "*I believe in* ONE GOD, THE FATHER ALMIGHTY, *Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible.*" Yet immediately after, the divine claims of another being are asserted, though not in such a way as to imply equality with the One God, the Father, just described: "*and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God; begotten of his Father before all worlds; God of* (*or from*) GOD; *Light of* (*or from*) LIGHT; *Very God of* (*or from*) VERY GOD." That is to say, we are recommended by this Creed to believe, after God the Father Almighty, in our Saviour Jesus Christ, who was God also in a secondary sense, as deriving his birth in a peculiar manner from the Father, being God by *derivation* from HIS substance, and light by *participation* of HIS light. Still, in these expressions, equality, on the part of Christ, with the Supreme Deity is not declared, either as to power or glory. On the contrary, such phrases indicate the decided inferiority of the Son of God to his Father, and his entire dependence on Him, as on the self-existent Deity, the great first cause of all things.

But perhaps it may be thought, that equality was meant to be included in the phrase, "*of one substance with the Father.*" To this I answer, that many acute reasoners have otherwise understood this expression; allowing, [p. 11] indeed, that it implied a parity of *nature*, but not the possession, to the full extent, of the *attributes* of Deity. It has been frequently admitted, that the members of the Nicene Council, in making use of this phrase, just signified their belief that Christ partook of the *substance* or *nature* of his Father, as any child partakes of the substance or nature of his parents.† But do sons in general, because they partake of the substance of their fathers,

* Priestley's General Church History, Vol. IX. of his Works, pp. 156, 270, 444 – 448. Mosheim, Vol. II. pp. 353, 354.

† Jortin, Vol. II. pp. 55, 56. Ben Mordecai's Apology (by the Rev. H. Taylor, Vicar of Portsmouth), Letter I. p. 32, &c.

possess, in consequence, the same stature, amount of health, degree of understanding, manners, and condition? If not, in what way is it certain that the members of the Nicene Council thought that Christ, as a son, of the same substance with God, was therefore placed on a perfect *equality* with Him? That they held a contrary opinion would be manifest from an examination of their writings.

A profound silence was maintained in the Council of Nice concerning the divinity of the Holy Spirit; which probably arose from this circumstance, that the Church was not then prepared, or even a considerable party in it, to decide what *precise* dignity this third person was entitled to. The Spirit, indeed, not long after the Son, had been mentioned by theologians as a Divine person, making part of a Trinity. But a considerable variety of opinion seems to have been entertained on this subject, and certainly less importance was attached for a long time to the Spirit than to Christ. Afterwards, when the ecclesiastical authorities became more bold, they added at Constantinople (A. D. 381) the clause which we find in the present copy of the Creed, characterizing the Holy Ghost as "*the Lord and Giver of life; who proceedeth from the Father; who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified; who spake by the prophets.*"

The Nicene Creed has sometimes been called Arian, even though expressly written in opposition to Arius at the instigation of Alexander, Bishop of Alexandria, prompted by his secretary, the celebrated Athanasius.* Yet this impropriety of language may be excused, if we consider how little the Nicene Creed differs from the opinions which Arius entertained. In truth, Arius and his opponent Athanasius had not much reason to quarrel, for their tenets were not so at variance as is commonly supposed. Both had departed far enough from primitive simplicity of doctrine. Both, at the same time, were yet at a considerable distance from Trinitarianism in its finished state. What was the subject of contention between them? Arius and Athanasius agreed that Christ was a powerful Divine Being, to whom the honors and title of God were, in [p. 12] some sense due; but they disputed about the manner in which this Being came into life. It was thought by Arius that Christ was produced out of

* Mosheim, Vol. I. pp. 413, 414. Priestley's Gen. Ch. Hist., Works, Vol. VIII. pp. 297–300.

nothing, by *creation*;* while Athanasius maintained that he sprang from the *substance of God*, by some kind of *generation*,† though not so as to imply (as indeed how could it?) *equality* with God. And on this nice question, so practically unimportant, the body of the Christian Church, in the fourth century, divided itself into two great parties, opposing, denouncing, and rejecting each other. Nor was it certain at first which party would prevail, so keen was the contest, and so numerous and obstinate were the adherents on both sides. The Council of Nice drew up the Creed which we have been considering, in favor of Athanasius, in A. D. 325; on which occasion Arius was condemned, and banished into Illyricum.‡ But ten years afterwards (A. D. 335), the fugitive was recalled, and admitted into communion by a council at Jerusalem, which agreed to accept his confession of faith as satisfactory.§ On the other hand, Athanasius also was severely scrutinized by several ecclesiastical assemblies.‖ He was five times expelled from his episcopal throne at Alexandria; twenty years he passed as an exile or a fugitive;¶ and his doctrine fluctuated between honor and disgrace, just as his party or that of Arius prevailed.** Victory at length decided for the adherents of Athanasius, towards the end of the fourth and the beginning of the fifth centuries. And in consequence of this triumph, and because the doctrine of the conqueror was a step nearer than that of his opponent to Trinitarianism as afterwards prevalent, the unfortunate Arius has been abandoned by posterity to the despised fate of a heretic, while honors have been heaped in succession upon Athanasius, and his name has been recorded among those of the choicest champions of orthodoxy, as well as of the most holy and revered saints of both Eastern and Western churches.

III. One remarkable consequence arose, in the sixth century,

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* Priestley's Hist. of Early Opinions, Vol. IV. p. 193, et seq.

† Ibid., p. 211, et seq.

‡ Mosheim, Vol. I. p. 414. Priestley, Vol. VIII. p. 300.

§ Priestley, Vol. VIII. p. 309.

‖ Ibid., pp. 308, 337, &c. Jortin, Vol. II. pp. 43–45.

¶ Gibbon's History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, Vol. III. p. 354, et seq.

** "In the fourth century," says Dr. Jortin, "were held thirteen councils against Arius, fifteen for him, and seventeen for the semi-Arians, in all, forty-five." Vol. II. p. 60.

from the renown thus obtained by Athanasius. The compilation of the *third*, or Trinitarian Creed, at that time new to the world, was imputed to him, as to by far the most celebrated of the Nicene Fathers. It was doubtless [p. 13] expected that this singular composition, by being published as the work of so eminent a theologian, would acquire an influence which otherwise, from its unreasonableness, it was ill calculated to secure; and we know that this expectation has been realized. It would be superfluous in me to prove that Athanasius was *not* the author of the Creed which passes current in his name, since its genuineness has been abandoned by the ablest historians and divines. "I say *called* the Athanasian Creed," writes Dr. Lardner, "for it is now generally allowed by learned men, that it is not the work of the celebrated Athanasius, Bishop of Alexandria, who flourished in the fourth century, but of some other person long after his time. Nor is it certainly known by whom it was composed." * Dr. Waterland conjectured that it was written by Hilary, Bishop of Arles in France, for the use of the Gallican clergy; † but it is much more likely that it was the work of Vigilius of Tapsa, who flourished between the middle and the end of the fifth century, and who was known to be the fabricator of various writings, which he published as the works of Athanasius.‡ But whoever was its author, it was not much known till towards the end of the sixth century, when it began to be commented on by its admirers. § Several centuries afterwards it was successively introduced into France, Spain, Germany, Italy, and England, where it still forms part of the public worship. But it has been disputed whether it was ever received among the Greek churches. ‖

This Creed, it will be allowed, is a perfect specimen of Trinitarian doctrine. I will add, that it is a fit representation of a system of faith which was completed in a dark period of the Church, when Christianity had been corrupted and obscured through ignorance and superstition. This Creed instructs us to worship "ONE GOD IN TRINITY, *and* TRINITY IN UNITY, *neither confounding the persons nor dividing the substance.*" It informs us that "*there is one person of the Father,*

* Dr. Lardner's Works, ed. 1815, Vol. V. p. 310.

† Encyclopædia Britannica, Art. Athanasian Creed.

‡ Bingham's Antiquities, Vol. IV. p. 119. Jortin, Vol. II. p. 437. Dr. Cave's Historia Literaria Script. Ecc., p. 146.

§ Ency. Brit., Art. Athanasian Creed. ‖ Ibid.

another of the Son, and another of the Holy Ghost, but" that "*the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, is all one, the glory equal, the majesty co-eternal.*" It declares that "*the Father is Almighty, the Son Almighty, and the Holy Ghost Almighty, and yet*" that "*they are not three Almighties, but one Almighty*"; that "*the Father is eternal, the Son eternal, and the Holy Ghost eternal, and yet*" that "*they are not three eternals, but one eternal*"; that "*the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God, and yet*" that "*they are not three* [p. 14] *Gods, but one God.*" Nor is this all; for with remarkable ingenuity it states the following distinctions: that "*the Father is made of none, neither created,* NOR *begotten*"; that "*the Son is of the Father alone, not made, nor created,* BUT *begotten*"; and that "*the Holy Ghost is of the Father and the Son, neither made, nor created, nor begotten,* BUT PROCEEDING"; to accord with (contradict?) which doctrine, it is next declared, that "*none of the persons*" in this Trinity "*is* AFORE *or* AFTER *other*," that "*none is greater or less than another, but*" that "*in all things, as is aforesaid, the unity in Trinity and Trinity in unity is to be worshipped.*" To sum up the whole, the Creed gravely warns us, that "*he that will be saved must* THUS THINK *of the Trinity*," and that "*except every one keep the same whole and undefiled,* WITHOUT DOUBT HE SHALL PERISH EVERLASTINGLY."

I shall briefly mention the final steps which were taken to bring the doctrine of the Trinity to this *perfect* state. I have already explained what the members of the Nicene Council understood by the expression, "*of one substance with the Father*," which they applied to Christ. It was their object by it to declare that our Lord derived his substance or nature from the substance or nature of the Supreme Deity, without its being supposed that, on this account, he should be considered as on complete equality with Him. In process of time, however, the phrase, "*of one substance*," &c., underwent an important alteration. In the course of half a century or more, it was interpreted to signify, that Christ and the Holy Ghost (to whom also it was applied) were, without reserve, equal in power and glory to the Father Almighty; * a conclusion which was established in this way. It was contended, that in the *substance* of God were necessarily implied all the *attributes* of

* Ben Mordecai's Apology, Letter I. p. 33.

Deity in their *infinite fulness*, and that it (the substance) could not be communicated without also conferring the possession of those *attributes* in the *same fulness*. Whence it followed, as it was thought, supposing Christ and the Holy Ghost to have partaken of the Divine *substance*, that they partook in consequence of all the *properties* of Divinity in a state of as great completeness as did the Supreme Father himself; so that no distinction of rank or power could be supposed to exist between the persons of the Trinity. This was the doctrine of many able men, both among the Greeks and Latins, who labored to propagate their sentiments with unwearied zeal and alacrity; till, aided by popular ignorance, and supported by a considerable share of imperial patronage, they succeeded in establishing the doctrine of a proper equality among the persons of the Trinity.

Still the system of the Trinity was not quite completed, for nothing had hitherto been determined concerning the manner in which the second [p. 15] person was united to the man Jesus Christ. It appears indeed strange, that this part of Trinitarianism, so important in modern times, should not have been explained till so late a period as the fifth century. Yet Dr. Mosheim informs us that this was the case; that, up till that time, the connection of Christ's natures was not even a subject of inquiry; and that the Christian doctors expressed themselves differently on it as they thought proper.* The first determination of the Church, on this subject, was made by a council held at Ephesus, A. D. 431;† which council was succeeded by another at Chalcedon, on the same matter, twenty years afterwards (A. D. 451).‡ It was declared at these assemblies, and more fully at the latter, that *Christ was one divine person, in whom two natures were most closely and intimately united, but without being mixed or confounded together.*§

In the first of these councils Nestorius was condemned for teaching that Christ's natures were only connected, in *sympathy* and *will*, without any *personal* or *hypostatic* union. In the second council an opposite opinion, maintained by Eutyches, viz. that Christ had but one nature, a compound of divinity and humanity, was also censured as heretical.‖

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* Mosheim, Vol. II. p. 65. † Ibid., p. 68.
‡ Ibid., Vol. II. p. 77. § Ibid., pp. 69, 78.
‖ Ibid. See Century V. Part II. Ch. V. in Vol. II.

But neither of these doctrines, though condemned, were vanquished by the ecclesiastical decrees. They were zealously supported by multitudes of Christians, and struggled with orthodoxy for a long time; and, indeed, have continued to flourish till this day in many Eastern churches.*

I shall conclude this chapter with one observation. The Council of Ephesus, which, with that of Chalcedon, completed Trinitarianism, decreed that the Virgin Mary should be received and honored as a supplement to the Trinity, under the title of *Theotokos*, or *Mother of God.*† This was done, as it was alleged, as a necessary consequence of the doctrine of the hypostatic union of two natures in Christ, which this council had determined. It was maintained that the divine nature of Christ was so closely connected with his humanity, even from the time of his conception, that Mary, in giving birth to him, was entitled to be called, not merely the Mother of Christ, but the Mother of God. All persons who held a contrary opinion were denounced as heretics by the prevailing party.

Thus this Council of Ephesus, which, with that of Chalcedon, completed Trinitarianism, did, by giving to Mary the profane title of Mother of God, pave the way for her future idolatrous worship, and in some degree sanctioned the many servile invocations which ignorance and superstition have since addressed to her as the Queen of Heaven.

[p. 16] But, indeed, superstition and idolatry had already commenced. As early as the fourth century, the images of saints and martyrs were erected in the churches, and particular virtues were ascribed to their presence; water was consecrated; idle shows were multiplied; dust and earth from Palestine were sold as remedies against evil spirits; celibacy was encouraged among the priests as giving superior sanctity; and I know not what train of silly observances was begun, the result of ignorance, and of a crooked ecclesiastical policy.‡

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* Priestley, Vol. VIII. p. 553. Mosheim, Vol. VI. p. 18.
† Priestley's Works, Vol. V. p. 196.
‡ Mosheim, Vol. I. pp. 365, 366.

CHAPTER II.

The same Subject confirmed by Quotations from the Works of the Theological Writers of Antiquity.

An examination of the works of the theologians who flourished in the early Christian centuries will render still more evident the progressive change from Unitarianism to Trinitarianism, which has been traced, in some measure, in the preceding chapter. We shall find that the language employed by the writers of the age immediately succeeding that of the Apostles is distinctly such as might be expected from men who believed in One God, the Father, and who did not consider Jesus Christ to be *more* than a man. Then follow, in the works of the next age, viz. from the middle of the second century till about the end of the fourth, statements and reasonings, in great number and variety, representing Christ and the Holy Spirit as divine persons, but inferior to the Father. While in the works of the third period, which includes all the centuries after the fourth, the doctrine of a proper equality among the persons of the Trinity will be found to be a settled and leading article of theology. Without more preface, I shall undertake to produce passages from the works belonging to each of these periods, in illustration of this view.

I. FIRST, OR UNITARIAN PERIOD.

Clement of Rome and Polycarp are the only two men on whose writings I can place reliance, in forming an opinion concerning the doctrine of the age immediately succeeding that of the Apostles; for the genuineness of the *Epistle* of Barnabas, and that of the *Shepherd* of Hermas, have long been disputed by divines; and to say the least of these productions, it is exceedingly *doubtful* whether they were composed before the middle of the second century, and have a right to rank

higher in authority than the works of that period. And regarding the epistles of Ignatius, though [p. 17] it is on all hands admitted that they were, in the main, written by that Father, yet they have been very much interpolated by those into whose hands they subsequently fell; so that it would be improper to employ them as evidence on a question of apostolical antiquity.* I proceed, therefore, to an examination of the testimonies of Clement and Polycarp; premising, that the dates annexed to the names of the several writers who are quoted in this chapter are intended to denote at what times these men flourished, according to Dr. Lardner, in his *Credibility of the Gospel History*.

CLEMENT OF ROME, A. D. 96.

"The writer," says Dr. Mosheim, "whose fame surpassed that of all others in this century, the Apostles excepted, was Clement, Bishop of Rome." † He is generally thought to have been the person whom St. Paul mentions among his "fellow-laborers, whose names are in the book of life." Phil. iv. 3. His epistle, from which I intend to quote some passages, was addressed, in the name of the church of Rome, to the church of Corinth, and was designed to put a stop to contentions and disturbances which had arisen in the latter body. "Upon this occasion," says Dr. Lardner, "Clement recom-

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* Mr. Wakefield (in his Inquiry into the Opinions of the Christian Writers of the Three First Centuries, ed. 1824, pp. 227, 228, 231) has given the following examples of interpolation of the epistles of Ignatius. (1.) "I glorify Jesus Christ [*the God*] who has thus made you wise." This is the reading of a passage in one set of Ignatius's epistles. But in another set (of the same epistles) we find: "I glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who *through him* has thus made you wise." (2.) "Ye did well in receiving Philo, &c., who followed me unto the word of God, as ministers of Christ [*a God*]." But in another set we read: "Ye did well in receiving Philo, &c., who followed me unto the word of God, who are ministers of Christ, as ministers of Christ." (3.) "That ye may prosper in all that ye do, in flesh and spirit, in faith and love, [*in the Son and the Father and the Spirit,*] in the beginning and in the end, with your most worthy bishop, and that well-woven spiritual crown your presbytery, and the deacons according to God." But in the other set the reading is: "That all things which you do may prosper, in flesh and spirit, in faith and love, with your most worthy bishop, and the well-woven and spiritual crown your presbytery, and the deacons according to God."

† Mosheim, Vol. I. p. 109.

mends not only concord and harmony, but love in general, humility, and all the virtues of a good life, and divers of the great articles and principles of religion. The style is clear and simple. It is called by the ancients an excellent, a useful, a great, and admirable epistle."* I add with pleasure, that having carefully read it (in the copy which we now have), I find it to have been the composition of a believer in the strict unity of God, and (I doubt not) the simple humanity of Jesus [p. 18] Christ. It does not contain a sentence which ascribes Deity to our Saviour, or personality to the *power* or *spirit* of God. My readers will perceive, from the following quotations, that its language agrees very much with that of the New Testament, clearly distinguishing God from his Son and Servant, and leaving no room for the opinion, that the *latter* was more than a human being, chosen of, and approved by, the Almighty Father, as the instrument of his will. Clement thus begins his epistle: —

The church of GOD, which sojourneth at Rome, to the church of GOD which sojourneth at Corinth, to the called, the sanctified by the will of GOD, *through* Jesus Christ our Lord, favor and peace be multiplied unto you, from the ALMIGHTY GOD, *through* Jesus Christ.

Ἡ ἐκκλησία τοῦ Θεοῦ ἡ παροικοῦσα Ῥώμην τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ τοῦ Θεοῦ παροικοῦσῃ Κόρινθον, κλητοῖς ἡγιάσμενοις ἐν θελήματι Θεοῦ, διὰ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ· Χάρις ὑμῖν καὶ εἰρήνη ἀπὸ παντοκράτορος Θεοῦ διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ πληθύνθειη, ἐφ' ὑμῶν ἴδιους καὶ ἐπ' ἀλλήλους.

SECT. 20. —All these things the great CREATOR and LORD of the universe has ordained to be in peace and harmony; blessing all; but most abundantly us, who have fled to HIS mercy, *through* our Lord Jesus Christ.

Ταῦτα πάντα ὁ μέγας δημιουργὸς καὶ δεσπότης τῶν ἁπάντων ἐν εἰρήνῃ καὶ ὁμόνοιᾳ προσετάξεν εἶναι, εὐεργετῶν τὰ πάντα, ὑπερεκπερισσῶς δὲ ἡμᾶς τοὺς προσπεφεύγοτας τοῖς οἰκτιρμοῖς αὐτοῦ, διὰ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ.

SECT. 32. — We, then, who are called, by HIS will, *in* Jesus Christ.

Καὶ ἡμεῖς οὖν διὰ θελήματος αὐτοῦ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ κληθεντες.

SECT. 42. — The Apostles

Οἱ ἀπόστολοι ἡμῖν εὐαγγελί-

* Lardner's Credibility of the Gospel History, in Works, Vol. I. p. 289.

preached the Gospel to us from the Lord Jesus Christ: Jesus Christ from GOD. Christ, therefore, was *sent out* by GOD; and the Apostles by Christ. Both these events were ordered by the *will* of GOD.

SECT. 46. — Have we not ONE GOD, and one Christ? Is there not one spirit of grace poured upon us, and one calling in Christ?

SECT. 49. — On account of the love which he bore to us, Christ our Lord gave his blood for us, by the *will* of GOD.

SECT. 50. — This blessedness is the lot of those who are chosen by GOD, *through* Jesus Christ, our Lord.

SECT. 58. — The ALL-SEEING GOD, the master of spirits, and the Lord of all flesh, who hath *chosen* our Lord Jesus Christ, and *us through* him.

SECT. 59. — The favor of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you, and with all those who have been everywhere called by GOD, *through* him (Jesus): through whom (Jesus), to HIM (GOD) be glory, honor, power, and majesty, an everlasting throne, from eternity to eternity. Amen.*

σθησαν ἀπὸ τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, Ἰησοῦς ὁ Χριστὸς ἀπὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ. Ἐξεπέμφθη ὁ Χριστὸς οὖν ἀπὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ, καὶ οἱ ἀπόστολοι ἀπὸ τοῦ Χριστοῦ· ἐγένοντο οὖν ἀμφότερα εὔτακτως ἐκ θελήματος Θεοῦ.

Ἢ οὐχὶ ἕνα Θεὸν ἔχομεν, καὶ ἕνα Χριστόν; καὶ ἓν πνεῦμα τοῦ χάριτος τὸ ἔκχυθεν ἐφ' ἡμᾶς, καὶ μία κλῆσις ἐν Χριστῷ;

Διὰ τὴν ἀγάπην ἣν ἔσχεν πρὸς ἡμᾶς, τὸ αἷμα αὐτοῦ ἔδωκεν ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ὁ Χριστὸς ὁ κυρίος ἡμῶν, ἐν θελήματι Θεοῦ·

Οὗτος ὁ μακαρισμὸς ἐγένετο ἐπὶ τοὺς ἐκλελεγμένους ὑπὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ, διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν.

Ὁ παντεπόπτης Θεὸς, καὶ δεσπότης [p. 19] τῶν πνευμάτων καὶ κυρίος πάσης σαρκὸς, ὁ ἐκλεξάμενος τὸν κυρίον Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν, καὶ ἡμᾶς δι' αὐτοῦ.

Ἡ χάρις τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ μὲθ' ὑμῶν, καὶ μετὰ πάντων πανταχῇ τῶν κεκλημένων ὑπὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ, καὶ δι' αὐτοῦ· δι' οὗ αὐτῷ δόξα, τιμὴ, κράτος, καὶ μεγαλωσύνη, θρόνος αἰώνιος, ἀπὸ τῶν αἰωνῶν, εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων. Ἀμήν.

* Photius, a zealous Trinitarian, after the Council of Nice, *censured* the Epistle of Clement for three things, the last of which was, that, "speaking of our high-priest and master, Jesus Christ, he did not make use of expressions sufficiently lofty and becoming a God, though he nowhere openly blasphemes him." — Priestley's Hist. of Opinions, Vol. I. p. 97.

POLYCARP, A. D. 108.

This Father had been the disciple of St. John, and was appointed by him bishop of the church of Smyrna. From the opportunity which he had of conversing with some of the immediate followers of our Saviour, his testimony concerning the faith of Christian antiquity should be esteemed of great value; but as he wrote little, I can produce only a few passages illustrative of his doctrine. They are taken from his epistle to the church of Philippi, the only work of his now remaining. It will be seen that they are of the same nature with the quotations from Clement, plainly distinguishing Jesus Christ from the God and Father, who selected him for his messenger. The epistle to the Philippians commences thus: —

Polycarp, and the elders with him, to the church of GOD which sojourneth at Philippi; mercy and peace be multiplied unto you from GOD ALMIGHTY, and the Lord Jesus Christ, our Saviour.

Πολυκάρπος, καὶ οἱ σὺν αὐτῷ πρεσβύτεροι τῇ ἐκκλήσιᾳ τοῦ Θεοῦ τῇ παροικοῦσῃ Φιλίπποις· ἔλεος ὑμῖν, καὶ εἰρήνη παρὰ Θεοῦ παντοκράτορος, καὶ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τοῦ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν πληθυνθείη.

SECT. 2. — Believing in HIM who raised our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead, and gave him glory, and a seat at HIS right hand.

Πιστεύσαντες εἰς τὸν ἐγείραντα τὸν κυρίον ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν ἐκ νέκρων, καὶ δόντα αὐτῷ δόξαν, καὶ θρόνον ἐκ δεξιῶν αὐτοῦ·

SECT. 3. — Hope following, love preceding, viz. love to GOD, to Christ, and to our neighbor.

Ἐπακολουθούσης τῆς ἐλπιδος, προαγούσης τῆς ἀγαπῆς, τῆς εἰς Θεὸν, καὶ Χριστὸν, καὶ εἰς τὸν πλήσιον.

SECT. 5. — Likewise the deacons, that they be blameless before him in righteousness, as the servants of GOD, and of Christ, and not of men.

Ὁμοίως διάκονοι ἀμέμπτοι κατενώπιον αὐτοῦ τῆς δικαιοσυνῆς, ὡς Θεοῦ [p. 20] καὶ Χριστοῦ διάκονοι, καὶ οὐκ ἀνθρωπων·

We ought, therefore, to abstain from all these (sins), and to be subject to the presbyters and deacons, as to GOD, and to Christ.

Διὸ δέον ἀπεχέσθαι ἀπὸ πάντων τουτῶν, ὑποτασσομένους τοῖς πρεσβύτεροις καὶ διάκονοις, ὡς Θεῷ καὶ Χριστῷ·

SECT. 12. — The GOD and FATHER of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the perpetual high-priest himself, the Son of God, Christ Jesus, build you up in faith, and truth, and in all meekness, &c.; and grant to you a lot and portion among his saints, and to us with you, and to all who, under heaven, shall believe in our Lord Jesus Christ, and in his FATHER, who raised him from the dead.

Deus * autem et Pater Domini Jesu Christi; et ipse sempiternus Pontifex, Dei Filius, Christus Jesus, ædificet vos in fide et veritate, et in omni mansuetudine, &c.; et det vobis sortem et partem inter sanctos suos, et nobis vobiscum, et omnibus qui sunt sub cœlo, qui crediturі sunt in Dominum nostrum, Jesum Christum, et in ipsius Patrem, qui resuscitavit eum a mortuis.

II. SECOND, OR SEMI-TRINITARIAN PERIOD.

Most of the quotations which I shall produce under this head, I *first* found in Dr. Priestley's *History of Early Opinions concerning Christ;* and it was my wish, on seeing them, to have procured the original writings from which they had been taken, with a view to revising the passages for confirmation or correction. But having *again* met with them, and with several more, in Dr. Samuel Clarke's *Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity*, I was sufficiently convinced, after a careful comparison, that they were accurate transcriptions, precluding the necessity of immediate revisal. They are here brought forward to show what were the opinions of the Fathers of the latter part of the second century, and of the whole of the third century, and of the beginning of the fourth, concerning God and Christ. It will appear from them that our Saviour was believed, in those ages, to have existed before his incarnation, and that he was esteemed a divine being, or deity; but *inferior* to God the Father, as is confessed in the most unambiguous manner. Similarly, other passages might be added concerning the Holy Spirit,† showing him also to have been reckoned below the Father, and sometimes below the Son. ‡

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* This quotation is from the Latin version, the Greek copy being wanting towards the end.

† In one of the passages from Origen, notice is taken of the Spirit *along with* the Son.

‡ Dr. Priestley's Hist. of Opinions, Vol. II. pp. 270, et seq.

But I think it proper, on account of the greater importance that has been attached to the Son, in all ages, since his deification, to confine attention at present to him.

[p. 21] JUSTIN MARTYR, A. D. 140.

He was a native of Palestine, originally a heathen philosopher, and converted to Christianity about the year 133. His principal works are two Apologies for the Christians, and a Dialogue with Trypho, a Jew. After a life of great piety and virtue, he suffered martyrdom. According to Mr. Lindsey* and Dr. Priestley,† he is the earliest author in whose writings any trace of the doctrine of Christ's deity is to be found. It was his opinion that Christ was a God, inferior to the Father, and that he appeared as such, on earth, several times before his incarnation.

He says: Neither Abraham, nor Isaac, nor Jacob, nor any man, ever saw the FATHER, and INEFFABLE LORD OF ALL, even of Christ himself; but (they saw) him who by *his* will was God, *his* Son, and an angel (or messenger), from his being subservient to *his* will, who, at *his* pleasure, was made a man from the virgin, who also, on one occasion, appeared in the form of fire, conversing with Moses, from the bush.

Οὔτε οὖν Ἀβραὰμ, οὔτε Ἰσαάκ, οὔτε Ἰακὼβ, οὔτε ἄλλος ἄνθρωπων εἶδε τὸν πάτερα καὶ ἄῤῥητον κυρίον τῶν πάντων ἁπλῶς, καὶ αὐτοῦ τοῦ Χριστοῦ, ἀλλ' ἐκεῖνον τὸν κατὰ βουλὴν τὴν ἐκείνου καὶ θεὸν ὀντὰ, υἱὸν αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἄγγελον ἐκ τοῦ ὑπηρετεῖν τῇ γνωμῇ αὐτοῦ, ὃν καὶ ἄνθρωπον γεννηθῆναι διὰ τῆς παρθένου βεβουλήται, ὃς καὶ πῦρ πότε γεγόνε τῇ πρὸς Μώσεα ὁμιλιᾷ τῇ ἀπὸ τῆς βάτου. Dial. cum Tryphonte, p. 411.

Speaking of the God in heaven, and the God upon earth, viz. Christ, who conversed with Abraham and others, Justin Martyr says: —

The former is the Lord of that Lord who was upon earth, being his FATHER, and GOD,

Ὃς [ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς ὑπάρχων] καὶ τοῦ ἐπὶ γῆς κυρίου κύριος ἐστὶν, ὡς πατὴρ καὶ Θεὸς, αἴτιος

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* Second Address to the Youth of both Universities, Introduc., p. xx., and p. 150.

† Hist. of Corruptions of Christianity, in Works, Vol. V. p. 37. Early Opinions, Vol. II p. 53.

the CAUSE of his existence, and of his being powerful, and Lord, and God.

τε αὐτῷ τοῦ εἶναι, καὶ δύνατῳ, καὶ κυρίῳ, καὶ θεῷ. Dial. p. 413.

While this writer believed that Christ made all things in an inferior sense, there was a higher sense, in which the phrase "Maker of all things" was thought by him to be applicable to the Father only.

I will endeavor to show that he who appeared to Abraham, Jacob, and Moses, and who is called God in Scripture, is different from THE GOD WHO MADE ALL THINGS; *numerically* different, but the *same* in *will*. For I say, that he never did anything but what that GOD WHO MADE ALL THINGS, and above whom there is no God, *willed* that he should do and say.

Πειράσομαι πείσαι ὑμᾶς ὅτι οὗτος ὁ τέ τῷ Ἀβραὰμ, καὶ τῷ Ἰακὼβ, καὶ τῷ Μώσει ὤφθαι λεγομένος, καὶ γεγράμμενος θεὸς, ἕτερος ἐστὶ τοῦ τὰ πάντα ποιήσαντος Θεοῦ· ἀριθμῷ λέγω ἀλλ' οὐ τῇ γνώμῃ. Οὐδὲν γὰρ φημὶ αὐτὸν πεπράχεναι πότε ἢ ἅπερ αὐτὸς ὁ τὸν κοσμὸν ποιήσας, ὑπὲρ ὃν [p. 22] ἄλλος οὐκ ἐστὶ θεὸς, βεβουλῆται, καὶ πράξαι καὶ ὁμιλῆσαι. Dial. p. 252.

I will endeavor to convince you that there is another who is called God and Lord, besides HIM THAT MADE ALL THINGS, who is also called an angel (or messenger), from his delivering to man whatever he who is the MAKER OF ALL THINGS, and above whom there is no God, *wills* that he should deliver.

Ἃ λέγω πειράσομαι ὑμᾶς πεῖσαι, νοησάντας τὰς γράφας, ὅτι ἐστὶ καὶ λεγέται θεὸς καὶ κυρίος ἕτερος, ὑπὲρ τὸν ποιήτην τῶν ὅλων, ὃς καὶ ἄγγελος καλεῖται, διὰ τὸ ἀγγελλειν τοῖς ἄνθρωποις ὅσαπερ βουλέται αὐτοῖς ἀγγεῖλαι ὁ τῶν ὅλων ποιητὴς, ὑπὲρ ὃν ἄλλος θεὸς οὐκ ἔστι. Dial. p. 249.

IRENÆUS, A. D. 178.

This Father was the disciple of Polycarp, and afterwards made Bishop of Lyons, in Gaul. He has always been esteemed, on account of his learning and piety, an ornament to the Christian religion.

He says: Our Lord himself, the Son of God, acknowledged that the FATHER *only* knew the day of judgment; declaring expressly, that of that

Dominus ipse, Filius Dei, ipsum judicii diem concessit scire solum Patrem; manifeste dicens, De die autem illa et hora nemo scit, neque Filius,

day and hour knoweth no man, neither the Son, but the FATHER *only*. Now, if the Son himself was not ashamed to leave the knowledge of that day to the FATHER, but declared the truth, neither ought we to be ashamed to leave to GOD such questions as are too high for us.

nisi Pater solus. Si igitur scientiam diei illius, filius non erubuit referre ad Patrem, sed dixit quod verum est; neque nos erubescimus, quæ sunt in quæstionibus majora secundum nos reservare Deo.

And in continuation of the same subject, he says:—

Since our Lord is the only teacher of truth, we should learn of him, that the FATHER is above all: for the FATHER, saith he, is greater than I. The FATHER, therefore, is by our Lord declared to be superior even in knowledge, to this end, that we, while we continue in this world, may learn to confess GOD only to have perfect knowledge, and resign such (difficult) questions to him.

Quoniam cum solus verax magister est dominus, ut discamus per ipsum, super omnia esse Patrem: Etenim Pater, ait, major me est. Et secundum agnitionem itaque præpositus esse Pater annunciatus est a Domino nostro, ad hoc ut et nos, in quantum in figura hujus mundi sumus, perfectam scientiam, et tales quæstiones concedamus Deo. Lib. II. cap. 48 et 49.

We hold fast the rule of truth, which is, that there is ONE GOD ALMIGHTY, who created all things, *through* his *Word*. This is the FATHER of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Cum teneamus autem nos regulam veritatis, id est, quia sit Unus Deus Omnipotens, qui omnia condidit per [p. 23] Verbum suum.—Hic Pater domini nostri Jesu Christi. Lib. I. cap. 19.

This GOD is the FATHER of our Lord Jesus Christ, and of Him it is that Paul declared, There is ONE GOD, even the FATHER, who is above all, and through all, and in us all.

Hic Deus est Pater Domini nostri Jesu Christi, et de hoc Paulus Apostolus dixit, unus Deus Pater, qui super omnes, et per omnia, et in omnibus nobis. Lib. II. cap. 2.

We believe in ONE GOD, the MAKER of heaven and earth, and of all things therein, *through* Jesus Christ, the *Son* of God.

In unum Deum credentes, fabricatorem cœli et terræ, et omnium quæ in iis sunt, per Christum Jesum Dei filium. Lib. III. cap. 4.

CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA, A. D. 194.

He presided over the Christian catechetical school in Alexandria, and has the title of presbyter given to him by several of the ancients.

He says: Be thou initiated, and join the chorus with the angels, about HIM who is the UNBEGOTTEN, and IMMORTAL, the ONLY TRUE GOD; *God the Word* accompanying us in our songs of praise. This perpetual Jesus, the one great High-Priest of the ONE GOD, who is also his FATHER, prays for men, and encourages men.

Εἰ βούλει, καὶ σὺ μυοῦ, καὶ χορεύσεις μετ' ἀγγέλων ἀμφὶ τὸν ἀγεννητὸν καὶ ἀνώλεθρον καὶ μόνον ὄντως Θεὸν, συνυμνοῦντος ἡμῖν τοῦ θεοῦ λόγου. Ἀΐδιος οὗτος Ἰησοῦς εἷς ὁ μέγας ἀρχιερεὺς θεοῦ τε ἑνὸς τοῦ αὐτου καὶ πάτρος, ὑπὲρ ἄνθρωπων εὔχεται, καὶ ἄνθρωποις ἐγκελευέται. Ad. Gentes, p. 74.

Our Lord taught, that GOD THE FATHER *only* is *supreme* over all, whom none knew but the *Son*.

Ὅτι Θεὸς καὶ πάτηρ εἷς καὶ μόνος ὁ παντοκρατὼρ, ὃν οὔδεις ἔγνω εἰ μὴ ὁ νίός. Strom. 7.

The Mediator performs the will of the FATHER: The *Word* is the Mediator, being common to both, the Son of God and the Saviour of men. Of the one (viz. GOD) he is the *servant*, but *our* instructor.

Καὶ τὸ θέλημα τοῦ πάτρος ὁ μεσῖτης ἔκτελει. μεσῖτης γὰρ ὁ λόγος, ὁ κοῖνος ἀμφοῖν Θεοῦ μὲν νίὸς, σώτηρ δὲ ἄνθρωπων. Καὶ τοῦ μὲν διάκονος, ἡμῶν δὲ παιδαγώγος Pædag. Lib. III. cap. 1.

TERTULLIAN, A. D. 200.

He was born at Carthage, and was a presbyter of the church in that city. He was skilled in various kinds of learning, and wrote with considerable ability. This writer has ascribed very high power to Jesus Christ as the *Son* of God; but with the express caution, that it was of a *delegated* nature, having been *given* to him as the instrument of the ALMIGHTY FATHER'S *will*. And to make this sufficiently clear, he represents the authority of Christ as similar to that of the angels, in so far as he, like them, holds a share in the Divine Monarchy, without *dividing* it any more than *they* do when they execute authority at the command of God. Ad. Praxeam, Sect. 3, p. 502. In continuation of this view he says:—

But I, who derive the *Son* from no other original than the substance of the FATHER, supposing him to do nothing but by the *will* of the FATHER, and to have received all his power *from* the FATHER, how is it that I destroy the belief of the (Divine) Monarchy which I preserve in the *Son*, being *delivered* by the FATHER to him (or in so far as it has been *delivered* by the FATHER to him).

Cæterum, qui Filium non aliunde [p. 24] deduco, sed de substantia Patris, nihil facientem sine Patris voluntate, omnem a Patre consecutum potestatem, quomodo possum de fide destruere monarchiam, quam a Patre Filio traditam in Filio servo. Ad. Praxeam, Sect. 3, p. 502.

Of course Tertullian could only have been speaking of what he considered to be Christ's *highest* state of existence in the above passage, as well as in the following, in which the *delegated* nature of Christ's authority is stated with equal distinctness.

He says: The *Son* always appeared, and the *Son* always acted, by the *authority* and *will* of the FATHER; because the *Son* can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the FATHER do.

Filius visus est semper, et Filius operatus est semper, ex auctoritate Patris et voluntate; quia Filius nihil a semetipso potest facere, nisi viderit Patrem facientem. Ad. Praxeam, Sect. 15.

Referring to John x. 30, "*I and my Father are one*," he thus explains this verse, in conformity with his view of Christ's subordination: —

He (Christ) says "*one*," using a neuter term, which does not convey the idea of singleness (of person or of being), but of unison, likeness, conjunction, the love of the FATHER to the *Son*, and the obedience of the *Son* to the FATHER's will.

Unum dicit, neutrali verbo, quod non pertinet ad singularitatem, sed ad unitatem, ad similitudinem, ad conjunctionem, ad dilectionem Patris, qui Filium diligit, et ad obsequium Filii, qui voluntati Patris obsequitur. Ad. Prax. Sect. 22.

Tertullian's conviction of the *sole supremacy* of the FATHER ALMIGHTY is properly shown in his application of the term *God* to him *only*, when the Son should at any time be mentioned along with him; the Son merely receiving the title of *Lord*, which is an *inferior* appellation.

He says: I do not absolutely say, that there are Gods and Lords, but I follow the Apostle;* and if the FATHER and the *Son* are to be named together, I call the FATHER GOD, and Jesus Christ Lord; though I can call Christ God when speaking of *himself alone*.

Itaque deos omnino non dicam, nec dominos; sed apostolum sequar, ut si pariter nominandi fuerint Pater et Filius, Deum Patrem appellem, et Jesum Christum Dominum nominem. Solum autem Christum potero Deum dicere, &c. Ad. Prax. Sect. 13, p. 507.

[p. 25] ORIGEN, A. D. 230.

He was a native of Egypt, and, like Clement, presided over the catechetical school in Alexandria. He was one of the most distinguished theologians of his age, whose writings have had no small reputation and influence.

He says: We maintain, that the *Saviour* and the *Holy Spirit* are as much, or even more excelled by the FATHER than *he* (Christ) and the *Holy Spirit* excel other things, &c.; and *he* (Christ), though excelling such and such great things (viz. thrones, principalities, and powers), in essence, and office, and power, and godhead, is by no means to be compared with the FATHER.

Φαμὲν τὸν σωτῆρα, καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον, ὑπερεχόμενον τοσοῦτον ἢ καὶ πλέον ἀπὸ τοῦ πάτρος ὅσῳ ὑπερέχει αὗτος καὶ τὸ ἅγιον πνεῦμα τῶν λοιπῶν, οὐ τῶν τυχόντων. Ἀλλ' ὁμῶς τῶν τοσαῦτων καὶ τηλικοῦτων ὑπερέχων οὐσιᾳ, καὶ πρεσβείᾳ, καὶ δυνάμει καὶ θειότητι, οὐ συγκρίνεται κατ' οὐδὲν τῷ πάτρι. Com. Vol. II. p. 218.

We may, by this means, solve the doubts of many men, who profess great piety, and who are afraid of making two gods; for we must tell them, that he who is *God of himself*, is THE *God*, as even our Saviour affirms in his prayer to his FATHER, that they may

Καὶ τὸ πόλλους φιλόθεους εἶναι εὐχομένους ταράσσον εὐλαβουμένους δύο ἀναγορεύσαι θέους, κ. τ. λ. ἐντεῦθεν λυέσθαι δύναται· λεκτέον γὰρ αὗτοις ὅτι τότε μὲν αὗτοθεος ὁ Θεὸς ἐστὶ, διόπερ καὶ ὁ σωτὴρ φησὶν ἐν τῇ πρὸς τὸν πάτερα εὐχῇ· ἵνα γινώσκωσι σὲ τὸν μόνον ἀληθινὸν θέον· πᾶν δὲ

* 1 Cor. viii. 6: *But to us there is but* ONE GOD, *the* FATHER, *of* (or *from*) *whom are all things, and we in him; and One Lord* (or *Master*), *Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.*

know THEE, THE ONLY TRUE GOD; but that whatsoever is God besides that self-existent person, being divine by partaking of *his* divinity, cannot be styled THE *God*, but severally A *God*; among whom especially is the *first born of all things* (that is, *Christ*).

παρὰ τὸ αὐτοθεος μετοχῇ τῆς ἐκείνου θεότητος θεοποιούμενον, οὐχ' ὁ Θεὸς, ἀλλὰ Θεὸς κυρίωτερον ἂν λεγοῖτο, ὧν παντῶς ὁ πρωτότοκος πάσης κτίσεως, ἅτε πρῶτος τῷ πρὸς τὸν θεὸν εἶναι. Comment. Vol. II. p. 47.

If we would learn what prayer is, we must take care not to pray to any creature; no, nor even to Christ himself, but to the GOD and FATHER of the universe *alone*, to whom our Saviour himself offered up his prayers.*

Ἐὰν δὲ ἀκούωμεν ὅτι πότε ἐστὶ προσεύχη, μήποτε οὐδένι τῶν γενητῶν προσεύκτεον ἐστὶν, οὐδὲ αὐτῷ τῷ Χριστῷ· ἀλλὰ μόνῳ τῷ Θεῷ τῶν ὅλων καὶ πάτρι, ᾧ καὶ αὐτος ὁ σωτὴρ ἡμῶν προσεύχετο ὡς πρόπαρεθεμεθα. De Oratione, p. 48.

[p. 26] NOVATIAN, A. D. 251.

He was a presbyter of Rome, and the founder of the sect of the Novatians. This sect, however, was not distinguished by any peculiar notions in theology. It differed only in refusing to those who had committed great crimes re-admission to church communion.

Novatian says: The rule of truth teaches us to believe, after the FATHER, in the *Son*

Eadem regula veritatis docet nos credere post Patrem etiam in filium Dei, Christum

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* Yet Origen, in another place, *allows* prayer to be addressed to Christ in an inferior sense, that is, if the supplicant can distinguish between what is prayer *properly* (which must be paid to the Father), and what is so only in a *secondary* light.

He says: We ought to send up all supplication, and prayer, and intercession, and thanksgiving, to the SUPREME GOD over all, *through* our High-Priest, who is above all angels, even him who is the living Word and God. Yet we may also offer up supplication, and intercession, and thanksgiving, and prayer, to the Word himself, if we can distinguish between that which is prayer *strictly* and *directly*, and that which is so *figuratively* and *obliquely*.

Πᾶσαν μὲν γὰρ δέησιν καὶ προσευχὴν καὶ ἔντευξιν καὶ εὐχαριστίαν ἀναπεμπτέον τῷ ἐπὶ πᾶσι Θεῷ, διὰ τοῦ ἐπὶ πάντων ἀγγέλων ἀρχιερέως, ἐμψύχου λόγου καὶ θέου. Δεησόμεθα δὲ τὲ αὐτου τοῦ λόγου, καὶ ἐντευξόμεθα αὐτῳ, καὶ εὐχαριστήσομεν, καὶ προσευξόμεθα δὲ, ἐὰν δύνωμεθα κατακούειν τὸ περὶ προσευχῆς κυριολεξίας καὶ καταχρήσεως. Contra Celsum, Lib. V.

of GOD, the Lord Jesus Christ, *our* God, yet the *Son* of GOD, of that GOD who is ONE and ALONE, the MAKER OF ALL THINGS.

He (Christ) although he was in the form of GOD, yet did not attempt the robbery of being equal with GOD.* For though he knew that he was *God*, of (or from) GOD the FATHER, he never compared himself with GOD the FATHER, [remembering that he was *of* the FATHER,] and that the FATHER *gave* him to be what he was.

Jesum dominum, Deum nostrum, sed Dei filium, hujus Dei qui et unus et solus est, conditor scilicet rerum omnium. Cap. ix. p. 26.

Hic ergo, quamvis esset in forma Dei, non est rapinam arbitratus æqualem se Deo esse. Quamvis enim se ex Deo Patre Deum esse meminisset, nunquam se Deo Patri aut comparavit aut contulit; memor se esse ex suo Patre, et hoc ipsum quod est, habere se, quia Pater dedisset. Cap. xxii. p. 84.

ARNOBIUS, A. D. 306.

He taught rhetoric at Sicca, in Africa, and wrote several books on behalf of Christianity.

He says: Then at length the omnipotent and ONLY GOD *sent* Christ.

[p. 27] *Christ*, A *God*, speaking by the order of the *principal* GOD.

Tum demum emiserit Christum, Deus omnipotens, Deus solus. Lib. II. p. 57.

Deus inquam Christus, Dei principis jussione loquens. Lib. II. p. 50.

LACTANTIUS, A. D. 306.

He was the disciple of Arnobius, and one of the most eloquent Latin writers of his age.

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* Doubtless Novatian alludes here to Philippians ii. 6, a verse which the common English Bible has not well translated: "*Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God.*" The verse would be rendered with greater accuracy and propriety, and more in accordance with the interpretation of at least two other ancient authorities besides Novatian: "*Who,* ALTHOUGH *in the form of God, thought it not his* RIGHT *to aim at a parity with God, but* (ON THE CONTRARY) *made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant,*" &c., so that he obtained AFTERWARDS high power and honor from God Almighty, the giver of every good and perfect gift. See on this verse Mr. Belsham's "Calm Inquiry into the Scripture Doctrine concerning the Person of Christ," pp. 133 – 138.

He says: He (Christ) approved his fidelity to GOD; for he taught that there is ONE GOD, and that *he only* is to be worshipped. Nor did he ever say that he himself was God. For he would not have preserved his allegiance, if, being sent to take away a multiplicity of gods, and to preach one God, he had brought in another besides that one. This would not have been to be the herald of the ONE GOD, or to have been doing the will of him who sent him, but his own, separating himself from him whom he came to honor. Wherefore, because he was so faithful, because he assumed nothing to himself, that he might fulfil the commands of him who sent him, he received the dignity of perpetual priest, the honor of supreme King, the power of a judge, and the *title* of *God.*

Ille vero exhibuit Deo fidem; docuit enim quod unus Deus sit, eumque solum coli opportere; nec unquam seipse Deum dixit; quia non servasset fidem, si missus, ut deos tolleret, et unum assereret, induceret alium, præter unum. Hoc erat, non de uno Deo facere præconium; nec ejus, qui miserat, sed suum proprium negotium gerere; ac se ab eo, quem illustratum venerat, separare. Propterea, quia tam fidelis extitit, quia sibi nihil prorsus assumsit, ut mandata mittentis impleret; et sacerdotis perpetui dignitatem, et regis summi honorem, et judicis potestatem, et Dei nomen accepit. Lib. IV. Sect. 14, p. 395.

EUSEBIUS, A. D. 315.

He was born at Cæsarea in Palestine, and afterwards made bishop of that city. He was present at most of the synods held in that part of the world, and was celebrated both as a theologian and an ecclesiastical historian.

He says: The only begotten *Son* of GOD, and the first-born of every creature, teaches us to call his FATHER the ONLY TRUE GOD, and commands us to worship HIM (the FATHER) *only.*

If this makes them apprehensive lest we should seem

Ὅτι καὶ αὐτος ὁ μονογενὴς τοῦ Θέου καὶ πρωτότοκος τῶν ὅλων ἡ πάντων ἀρχὴ, τὸν αὔτου πάτερα μόνον ἡγεῖσθαι θέον ἀληθῆ καὶ μόνον σέβειν ἡμῖν παράκελευεται. Præparatio, Lib. VII. cap. 15

Εἰ δὲ φόβον αὔτοις ἐμποιεῖ, μήπη ἄρα δύο θέους ἀναγορεύειν

to introduce *two* Gods; let them know, that though we do indeed acknowledge the *Son* to be God, yet there is (absolutely) but ONE GOD; even *he* who *alone* is without original, and unbegotten, who has his divinity properly of himself, and is the cause even to the *Son* himself both of his being, and of his being such as he is; by whom the *Son* himself confesses that he lives: declaring expressly, I live by the FATHER. Whom the *Son* himself teaches us to look upon as the ONLY TRUE GOD, and declares to be *greater* than himself, whom he also would have us all understand to be even *his* GOD.

δόξαι. ἐνιστωσαν, ὡς, τοῦ υἱοῦ πρὸς ἡμῶν ὁμολογοῦμενου θέου, εἷς ἂν γενοῖτο μόνος Θέος, ἐκεῖνος ὁ μόνος ἄναρχος καὶ ἀγεννητος, ὁ τὸν θεότητα οἰκεῖαν κεκτῆμενος, αὐτῷ τὲ τῷ υἱῳ τοῦ εἶναι καὶ τοῦ τοιῷδε εἶναι γεγενὸς αἴτιος· δι' ὃν καὶ αὖτος ὁ υἱὸς ὁμολόγει ζῆν, [p. 28] ἀντικρὺς λέγων —— κᾳγὼ ζῶ διὰ τὸν πάτερα —— ὃν καὶ μόνον ἀληθινὸν Θεὸν ἡγεῖσθαι ἡμᾶς [ὁ υἱὸς] διδάσκει, μείζονα τὲ εἶναι ἑαυτοῦ ὁμολόγει, ὃν —— καὶ θεὸν εἶναι ἑαυτοῦ πάντας ἡμᾶς εἴδεναι βούλεται. De Eccles. Theol. Lib. I. cap. 11.

ATHANASIUS, A. D. 326.

This man, who succeeded Alexander as Bishop of Alexandria, has already (Chap. I.) been noticed. He was the leader of a party, whose doctrine approached nearer to completed Trinitarianism than that of any other before or during his time; and his zeal for his opinions, and labor on their behalf, were unremitting. Yet even *he* makes a considerable difference between the Son of God and the Father. I shall conclude these extracts with the following quotations from his writings.

He says: GOD THE MAKER AND GOVERNOR of all things, who is far above all being, and all that the mind of man can conceive, as being good and excellent above all things, made mankind after his own image, by his *Word*, even by our *Lord Jesus Christ*.

For there is ONE GOD, and

Ὁ μὲν γὰρ τοῦ πᾶντος δημιουργὸς καὶ παμβασιλεὺς Θεὸς, ὁ ὑπερεκεῖνα πασῆς οὔσιας καὶ ἀνθρώπινης ἐπίνοιας ὑπάρχων, ἅτε δὴ ἀγαθὸς καὶ ὑπερκαλλὸς ὢν, διὰ τοῦ ἰδιου λόγου, τοῦ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Χριστοῦ, τὸ ἀνθρωπινὸν γένος κατ' ἰδιαν εἰκονα πεποίηκε. Contra Gentes.

Εἷς γὰρ Θεὸς ἔστι, καὶ οὐκ

there is *none other but he.* And when the Scripture saith, the FATHER is the ONLY GOD, and that there is ONE GOD, and I am the first, and I am the last, these things are well spoken: For he is the ONE GOD, and the ONLY ONE, and the FIRST. And yet these things do not destroy the divinity of the *Son;* for he also is *in* that ONE, and FIRST, and ONLY ONE, as being the *only Word*, and *Wisdom*, and *Effulgence* of him, who is the ONE, and the ONLY ONE, and the FIRST.

ἔστιν ἄλλος πλὴν αὐτοῦ· ὅτε γοῦν μόνος λέγεται ὁ πατὴρ Θεος, καὶ ὅτι εἷς θεὸς ἔστι, τὲ τὸ Ἐγὼ πρῶτος καὶ ἐγὼ μετὰ ταῦτα, καλῶς λέγεται. Εἷς γὰρ Θεὸς καὶ Μόνος τὲ Πρῶτος ἔστιν. Οὐκ εἰς ἀναίρεσιν δὲ τοῦ υἱοῦ λέγεται· μὴ γενοῖτο. Ἔστι γὰρ καὶ αὗτος ἐν τῷ Ἑνι καὶ Πρῶτῳ καὶ Μόνῳ, ὡς τοῦ Ἑνος καὶ Μόνου καὶ Πρῶτου καὶ μόνος λόγος τὲ σοφία καὶ ἀπαύγασμα ὤν. Orat. III. Contra Arianos.

He whom we worship and preach, is the ONLY TRUE GOD, the Lord of all creatures, and the author of all being; and who else is that, but the most holy FATHER of Christ, even he who is above all derivative being? who, as an excellent governor, governs and preserves everything everywhere, and disposes and does everything after his own pleasure, by his own *Wisdom*, and his own *Word*, even by our *Lord Jesus Christ.*

Τὸν παρ' ἡμῶν προσκυνοῦμενον καὶ κηρυττόμενον, τοῦτον μόνον εἶναι Θεὸν ἀληθῆ, τὸν καὶ τὴς κτίσεως κυρίον, καὶ πασῆς ὑποστασεως δημιουργόν. Τίς δὲ οὗτος, ἀλλ' ἢ ὁ πάναγιος τὲ ὑπερεκεῖνα πασῆς γενήτης οὔσιας ὁ τοῦ [p. 29] Χριστοῦ πατὴρ; ὅστις καθαπὲρ ἄριστος κυβερνητὴς, τῇ ἴδια σοφίᾳ καὶ τῷ ἴδιῳ λόγῳ τῷ κυρίῳ ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστῷ τὰ πάνταχου κύβερνᾳ σωτηριῶς καὶ διάκοσμει, καὶ ποιεῖ, ὡς ἂν αὗτῳ καλῶς ἔχειν δόκῃ. Id. ibid.

The numerous passages which I have quoted, and the many similar which occur in the writings of the Fathers of the second and third centuries, cannot, it may be thought, have been unobserved by the Trinitarian student of antiquity. How, then, does he account for them? In what way can he explain that so many writers, in the first ages, have left distinct proofs that they believed Christ (however high the place and honor they thought due to him) to have been still inferior to the one God, the Father Almighty? The answer given by some persons is little more than an admission of the fact, viz. that the ancients

were yet imperfect in their theological knowledge, perfection being reserved for a later age. Thus "Mr. Jurieu," says Dr. Jortin, "whose zeal against heresy is well known, assures us, that the fundamental articles of Christianity were not understood by the Fathers of the three first centuries; that the true system *began to be modelled* into some shape by the Nicene bishops, and was afterwards *immensely improved* and *beautified* by the following synods and councils."* To the same purpose is the confession of Bishop Bull, one of the most learned and strenuous defenders of Trinitarianism. He says, in way of apology, though indeed it is none, "that almost all the Catholic writers before Arius's time seem not to have known anything of the invisibility and immensity of the Son of God; and that they often speak of him in such a manner, as if, even in respect of his divine nature, he was *finite*, *visible*, and *circumscribed in place*." †

III. THIRD, OR TRINITARIAN PERIOD.

It is not necessary that I should produce many quotations from the writers of this period, illustrative of the state of completeness to which Trinitarianism at length arrived. But a *few* passages will be usefully contrasted with the preceding extracts. The following evidence will show [p. 30] how much the opinions of theological writers altered towards the end of the fourth century, and afterwards. Whereas formerly it had been the uniform custom tc call the Father the only true God, it became now fashionable to say, that the Trinity was the one God.* Thus Austin, speaking of the immensity of the Divine nature, says:

So is the Father, so is the Son, so is the Holy Spirit, so is the TRINITY, ONE GOD.	Ita Pater, ita Filius, ita Spiritus sanctus, ita Trinitas, unus Deus. Opera, Vol. II. p. 274.

* Jurieu, as quoted by Dr. Jortin, Vol. II. p. 29.

† Bishop Bull, as quoted in Ben Mordecai's Apology, Letter I. p. 30. Dr. Jamieson of Edinburgh wrote two volumes, entitled "A Vindication of the Deity of Christ, in Reply to Dr. Priestley's History of Early Opinions"; but no notice has been taken in those volumes of a very important chapter in Dr. Priestley's work, viz. Chap. IV. of Book II., wherein so many proofs are given of the faith of antiquity concerning the inferiority of Christ to God the Father. I must suppose, from this omission, that Dr. Jamieson was convinced of his want of power to answer the strong evidence which Dr. Priestley had arranged.

‡ Priestley's Hist. of Early Opinions, Vol. II. p. 339.

And explaining the saying of our Saviour, "There is none good but one, that is God," he thus writes: —

It is not said, that there is none good but the Father, but there is none good but God. By the term Father is meant the Father, but by the term God is meant the FATHER, SON, and HOLY SPIRIT; for the TRINITY is the ONE GOD.

Non ait nemo bonus nisi solus Pater, sed nemo bonus nisi solus Deus; in patris enim nomine, ipse per se Pater pronunciatur, in Dei vero et ipse, et Filius, et Spiritus sanctus, quia Trinitas unus Deus. De Trinitate, Lib. V. cap. 8.

In another place he says: The TRINITY is one, and of the same nature, not less in each than in all, nor greater in all than in each; as great in the Father only, or in the Son only, as in the Father and the Son together; and as great in the Holy Spirit alone, as in the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Hæc Trinitas una est ejusdemque naturæ atque substantiæ, non minor in singulis, quam in omnibus: nec major in omnibus, quam in singulis, sed tanta in solo Patre vel in solo Filio, quanta in Patre simul et Filio, et tanta in solo Spiritu sancto, quanta simul in Patre et Filio et Spiritu sancto. Op. Vol. II. p. 319.

Similar language to this is made use of by various other writers of the fourth and fifth centuries.

The Son, says Basil, is *all* that the Father is.

Πάντα ὧν ὅσα ἐστὶν ὁ πάτηρ. De Fide. Op. Vol. I. p. 430.

By maintaining, says Gregory Nazianzen, any of the three persons to be *inferior* to the other, we overturn the whole (Trinity).

Καὶ ὅ, τί ἂν τῶν τρίων κάτω θωμὲν, τὸ πᾶν κάθαιρειν νομίζομεν. Or. 20. Opera, p. 3 8.

Jerome says, That since Christ is the power of God, and the wisdom of God, he contains *all* the Father's perfections.

Cum enim Christus Dei virtus sit, Deique sapientia, omnes in se virtutes continet Patris. In Esaiam, Lib. XII. Op. Vol. IV. p. 140.

Chrysostom prefers the Father to the Son, only because he precedes him in the order of *thought*.

I name the Father first, not because he holds a priority in rank, but only in thought, being the parent of the only begotten; the root of the hôly fruit.

Λέγω Πάτερα πρῶτον, οὐ τῇ τάξει [p. 31] πρῶτον, ἀλλὰ τῇ ἔννοια, ἐπειδὴ γεννητὼρ τοῦ μονογενοῦς, ἐπειδὴ ἡ ῥίζα τοῦ ἅγιου κάρπου. Opera, Vol. VI. p. 34.

There is no difference, says Theodoret, between the FATHER, the SON, and the SPIRIT, either in nature or in will, but only in generating, and being generated, in emitting, and proceeding.

A. Οὐκ ἔστιν οὖν διαφορὰ Πάτρος καὶ Υἱοῦ, καὶ ἁγίου Πνεύματος; Ο Ἐν τῇ φύσει οὔ· ἐν τῷ θελήματι οὔ· ἐν τῷ γεννᾶν καὶ γεννᾶσθαι, καὶ ἔκπεμπειν, καὶ ἐκπορεύεσθαι, ναί. Dial. adv. Anomæos. Opera, Vol. V. p. 275.

If any one, says Pope Damasus, does not say, that the FATHER, SON, and SPIRIT have one Godhead, power, dominion, glory, and authority, one kingdom, one will, and one truth, let him be anathema.

Εἰ τις μὴ εἴπῃ τοῦ Πάτρος, καὶ τοῦ Υἱοῦ, καὶ τοῦ ἁγίου Πνεύματος, μίαν θεότητα, ἔξουσιαν, δυναστείαν μίαν, δόξαν, κυρίοτητα μίαν, βασιλείαν μίαν, θέλησιν, καὶ ἀληθείαν, ἀναθήμα ἐστώ. Theodoreti Hist. Lib. V. p. 211.*

The distinct and bold tone of these passages sufficiently indicates the degree of perfection to which the doctrine of three divine persons in the Godhead ultimately arrived. The reader, after what I have written in this and the preceding chapter, will be prepared to judge, whether it was not after the lapse of several centuries, and by a gradual change of opinion, that Trinitarianism was completed.

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* See Dr. Priestley's Hist. of Early Opinions, Vol. II. Book II. Ch X. Sect. I. p. 339, et seq.

CHAPTER III.

Of the Opposition which was made, at Different Times, to the Introduction and Spread of Trinitarianism.

It will naturally be supposed, that so important a change as has been pointed out could not have taken place without meeting with resistance from *many*, if not the *mass*, of the people. Yet the proof which we have of such resistance is not so full as were to be wished, because the works of those men who were called upon to defend the strict unity of God in the early centuries have been lost, or purposely destroyed by their opponents. Still we can collect evidence, even from the writings of those opponents, to show that the progress from Unitarianism to Trinitarianism was a work of labor, difficulty, and contention.

[p. 32] The doctrine of the pre-existence and deity of Jesus Christ was probably not very old in the time of Justin Martyr, an author whom I have already stated (p. 18) to have been considered by Mr. Lindsey and Dr. Priestley as the earliest writer in whose works any trace of it is to be found. That this Father was aware of the difficulty of his position, as the advocate of a new and contested opinion, when he taught Christ's Deity, will be evident from the following passage, which occurs in his dialogue with the Jew Trypho: —

He says, speaking of our Saviour: It will not follow that he is not the Christ, though I should not be ABLE TO PROVE that he pre-existed as God, the Son of him that made all things, and that he became a man by the Virgin. It being altogether certain,

Οὐκ ἀπόλλυται τὸ τοιοῦτον εἶναι Χρίστον τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐὰν ἀπόδειξαι μὴ δυνώμαι ὅτι καὶ προϋπῆρχεν, υἱὸς τοῦ ποιητοῦ τῶν ὅλων θεὸς ὢν, καὶ γεγένηται ἄνθρωπος διὰ τῆς πάρθενου. Ἀλλὰ ἐκ πάντος ἀποδεικνυμένου ὅτι οὗτος ἐστὶν ὁ Χρίστος ὁ τοῦ Θεοῦ, ὅστις οὗτος ἔσται, ἐὰν δὲ μὴ ἀποδεικνύω

that he is the Christ of God, whoever he was, though I should not prove that he pre-existed, becoming (afterwards) a man of like sufferings with ourselves, having flesh according to the Father's will; it will be right to say, that in this only I have been MISTAKEN, and not that he is not the Christ, though he should appear to be a man, born of men. For there are those of our race who acknowledge him to be Christ, but say that he was a man, born of men. With these I do not agree, nor should I do so, though EVER SO MANY holding this opinion should urge it on me; because we are commanded by Christ himself NOT TO OBEY THE TEACHINGS OF MEN, but what was taught by the holy prophets and himself.

ὅτι προύπηρχε καὶ γενιηθῆναι ἄνθρωπος ὁμοίοπαθης ἡμῖν, σάρκα ἔχων, κατὰ τὴν τοῦ Πάτρος βούλην, ὑπεμείνεν, ἐν τούτῳ πεπλανῆσθαι μὲ μόνον λέγειν δικαίον, ἀλλὰ μὴ ἀρνεῖσθαι ὅτι οὗτος ἐστὶν ὁ Χρίστος, ἐὰν φαίνηται ὡς ἄνθρωπος ἐξ ἀνθρώπων γεννηθεὶς, καὶ ἐκλογῇ γενομένος εἰς τὸν Χρίστον εἶναι ἀποδεικνυηται. Καὶ *γὰρ εἶσι τινὲς, ὦ φίλοι, ἔλεγον, ἀπὸ τοῦ ἡμέτερου γενοῦς ὁμολογοῦντες αὐτὸν Χρίστον εἶναι, ἄνθρωπον δὲ ἐξ ἀνθρώπων γενόμενον ἀποφαινόμενοι. Οἷς οὐ σύντιθεμαι, οὐδ' ἂν πλεῖστοι ταύτα μοὶ δοξάσαντες εἶποιεν, ἐπειδὴ οὐκ ἀνθρωπείοις διδάγμασι κεκελεύσμεθα ὑπ' αὐτοῦ τοῦ Χριστοῦ πείθεσθαι, ἀλλὰ τοῖς διὰ τῶν μακαρίων προφητῶν κηρύχθεισι καὶ δι' αὐτοῦ διδάχθεισι.* Dial. p. 233.

Two things are worthy of notice in this extract, as showing how much Justin Martyr felt the difficulty of his situation as the teacher of a new and contested doctrine. 1. He is not certain of his ability to *prove* his doctrine to the satisfaction of his opponent. It is true, indeed, that that opponent was not a Christian, but a Jew, but this does not materially alter the case; for Justin did not question his ability to convince the Jew that Jesus was the *Messiah* or *Christ;* after which, of course, no room could have been left him to doubt of satisfying him concerning Christ's [p. 33] *deity* also, had it not been that he had less confidence in that doctrine, as one that was new, and not sufficiently established. "*It will not follow,*" says he, "*that he is not the Christ, though I should not be* ABLE TO PROVE *that he pre-existed as God, the Son of him that made all things, and that he became a man by the Virgin. It being altogether certain that he is the Christ of God, whoever he was, though I should not prove that he pre-existed, &c.; it will be right to say, that in this only I have been* MISTAKEN, *and not*

that he is not the Christ, though he should appear to be a man, born of men." 2. The manner in which Justin speaks of his situation in connection with the Unitarians of his age is such as can only be explained on the supposition that these Unitarians were a large and powerful party; and yet Justin did not probably refer to *all* classes of Unitarians, but to those only who did not receive the doctrine of Christ's miraculous conception, being a *portion* of the whole body. "*For there are those*," he continues, "*of our race, who acknowledge him to be Christ, but say that he was a man, born of men. With these I do not agree; nor should I do so, though* EVER SO MANY *holding this opinion should urge it on me; because we are commanded by Christ himself* NOT TO OBEY THE TEACHINGS OF MEN, *but what was taught by the holy prophets and himself.*" This is the language of a man not very confident in the strength of his party, laboring under fear from his opponents, and determined, therefore, to shield himself, when surrounded by persons of a different faith, with the reflection, that his opinions were, as *he* thought, in accordance with the instructions of Jesus Christ.

The contest between the advocates for a Trinity of persons in the Godhead and the mass of common Christians who opposed that scheme, appears to have been very keen about the end of the second century, as will be evident from the following quotation from Tertullian. It is extracted from a controversial work, which Tertullian wrote against Praxeas, who was the popular advocate for the Unity of God at that period, though his views were not, perhaps, altogether so simple as those of apostolical antiquity.* It is only necessary to be premised, for the right understanding of the passage, that the term "*monarchy*," which occurs in it, was the watchword of the Unitarian party, against whom Tertullian wrote; while the term "*economy*" was used by Tertullian and his friends to denote their distribution of the Godhead into *three distinct* persons, or, in other words, the doctrine of the Trinity, such as it *then* stood.

The simple, says Tertullian, (not to call them ignorant and unlearned) who are always the

Simplices enim quippe, ne dixerim imprudentes et idiotæ, quæ major semper credentium

* For an account of Praxeas, see page 47.

GREATER PART OF BELIEVERS, since the Rule of faith itself transfers them from the many gods of the heathen to the One True God, not understanding that the One God is indeed to be believed, but with his own ECONOMY (that is, his distribution into three persons), are startled at the ECONOMY. They presume that the number and arrangement of a Trinity is a *division* of the Unity. They, therefore, hold out that *two* and even *three* Gods are taught by *us;* assuming that *they* are the worshippers of One God. We, they say, (speaking concerning themselves,) hold the MONARCHY. Even the Latin clowns shout so loudly for the MONARCHY, that you would suppose that they understood it as well as they pronounce it. But the Latins *do* learn to shout for the MONARCHY; and even the Greeks themselves *will not* understand the ECONOMY.

pars est, quoniam et ipsa regula fidei a pluribus diis [p. 34] seculi, ad unicum et Deum verum transfert; non intelligentes unicum quidem, sed cum sua œconomia esse credendum, expavescunt ad œconomiam. Numerum et dispositionem Trinitatis divisionem præsumunt Unitatis; Itaque duos et tres jam jactitant a nobis prædicari, se vero unius Dei cultores præsumunt. —— Monarchiam, inquiunt, tenemus; et ita sonum vocaliter exprimunt etiam Latini, etiam opici, ut putes illos tam bene intelligere Monarchiam, quam enunciant. Sed Monarchiam sonare student Latini, œconomiam intelligere nolunt etiam Græci. Adversus Praxeam, Sect. 3, p. 502.

It is evident from this extract that Tertullian considered the GREATER PART OF BELIEVERS in his time to have been unwilling to receive the Trinitarian faith, which he and his party were endeavoring to establish. Being "*simple*" persons, and, it may be, "*ignorant and unlearned*," they were not ready enough to accede to a foreign and inventive philosophy, which was the true character of Trinitarianism, as will be proved in another place (Chap. V.) "*We, they say, hold the* MONARCHY. *Even the Latin clowns shout so loudly for the* MONARCHY, *that you would suppose that they understood it as well as they pronounce it. But the Latins* do *learn to shout for the* MONARCHY; *and even the Greeks themselves* will not *understand the* ECONOMY."

The importance of this testimony has occasioned attempts on the part of modern Trinitarians to weaken its force by *explanation;* but without success. Dr. Horsley, afterwards Bishop of St. Asaph, gave, in his controversy with Dr. Priestley, a *miserable* exposition (of a part of the passage), which served only to show how much anxiety he felt to invalidate evidence which spoke strongly against his cause. This exposition is subjoined below.*

[p. 85] Not very many years elapsed from the time of Tertullian's contest with Praxeas till the period in which Origen flourished (about A. D. 230). Now, this Father has left positive testimony of his experience of the difficulty with which the doctrine of Christ's Deity was promoted in his time among the mass of common Christians. He has informed us that the great body of reputed believers, in his age, knew only *Christ crucified*, while they were ignorant of him as the *Word of God*, who was in the beginning with God;† so that it became necessary to inculcate such topics as Christ's Divinity, &c., only on those who showed symptoms of desire for lofty objects of belief. This will be proved by the following quotations.

Origen says: There are who partake of the Word which was from the beginning, the Word that was with God, and the Word that was God, as Hosea, Isaiah, and Jeremiah, and any others who speak of him as the Word of God, &c. But there are others who know nothing but Jesus Christ, and him crucified.

Οὕτω τοίνυν οἱ μὲν τίνες μετέχουσιν αὐτοῦ τοῦ ἐν ἀρχῇ λόγου, καὶ πρὸς τὸν Θέον λόγου, καὶ Θεοῦ λόγου, ὡσπὲρ Ὥσηε, καὶ Ἡσαΐας, καὶ Ἱερεμίας, καὶ εἰ τὶς ἑτερὸς τοιοῦτον ἑαυτὸν παρέστησεν ὡς τὸν λόγον Κυρίου, ἢ τὸν λόγον γενέσθαι πρὸς αὐτόν. ἕτεροι δὲ οἱ μηδὲν εἴδοτες εἰ μὴ Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν καὶ τοῦτον ἐσταυρῶμενον, τὸν γένομενον σάρκα λόγον, τὸ

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* "*Some* simple people take alarm at the notion of a plurality of persons in the unity of the Godhead. Simple people, say I! I should have said, ignorant and dull, &c. When it is considered that persons of mean endowments must always be the majority of a body, collected, as the Church is, from all ranks of men, it were no wonder if the followers of the Unitarian preachers were more numerous than they really are." Dr. Horsley's Tracts, ed. 1812, p. 196.

† The "Word of God," mentioned in John i. 1, is here assumed by Origen, as it is in several other extracts in this work, to mean the pre-existent Son of God, being the ordinary Trinitarian interpretation. But the incorrectness of this view will be shown in Chapter IV.

fied, the Word that was made flesh, thinking that they have everything of the Word, when they acknowledge Christ according to the flesh. Such is the MULTITUDE of those who are considered to be believers.

Again he says: The MULTITUDES of reputed believers are instructed in the *shadow* of the Word, and not in the true Word of God, which is in the open heaven.

Still further, Origen says: This we ought to understand, that as the Law was a *shadow* of good things to come, &c., so is the Gospel but a *shadow* of Christ's mysteries to all beginners. But that which John calls the everlasting Gospel, and which may be more properly called the *spiritual*, instructs the more intelligent very clearly concerning the Son of God. Wherefore the doctrine of Christ must be taught both *corporeally* and *spiritually;* and when it is necessary, we must preach the *corporeal* Gospel, saying to the carnal that we KNOW NOTHING BUT JESUS CHRIST, AND HIM CRUCIFIED. But when persons are found confirmed in the spirit, bringing forth fruit in it, and in love with heavenly wisdom, we must impart to them the Word returned from his bodily state, to that state (of glory) in which he was in the beginning with God.

πᾶν νομιζόντες εἶναι τοῦ λόγου Χριστον κατὰ σάρκα μόνον γινώσκουσι· τοῦτο δὲ ἐστὶ τὸ πλῆθος τῶν πεπιστευκέναι νομιζόμενων. Comment. in Johan. Vol. II. p. 49.

Τὰ δὲ πληθῆ τῶν πεπιστευκέναι νομιζόμενων τῇ σκιᾷ τοῦ λόγου, καὶ οὔχι τῷ ἀληθινῷ λόγῳ Θεοῦ ἐν τῷ ἀνεώγοτι οὐρανῷ τυγχάνοντι, μαθητευέται. Ibid., Vol. II. p. 52.

Καὶ τοῦτο δὲ εἴδεναι ἐχρὴν, ὅτι ὡσπὲρ ἔστι νόμος σκίαν πάρεχων τῶν μελλόντων ἀγαθων, ὑπὸ τοῦ κατ' ἀληθείαν καταγγελλομένου νόμου δηλούμενων, οὕτω καὶ εὐαγγέλιον σκίαν μυστήριων Χρίστου δίδασκει, τὸ νομιζόμενον ὑπὸ πάντων τῶν ἐντυγχανόντων νοεῖσθαι. [p. 36] *Ὅδε φησὶν Ἰωάννης εὐαγγέλιον αἰώνιον, οἰκειῶς ἂν λεχθήσομενον πνευματικὸν, σαφῶς παριστήσι τοῖς νοοῦσι τὰ πάντα ἐνώπιον περὶ υἱοῦ τοῦ Θεοῦ. — Διοπὲρ ἀναγκαῖον πνευματικῶς καὶ σωματικῶς χριστιανίζειν· καὶ ὅπου μὲν χρὴ τὸ σωμάτικον κήρυσσειν εὐαγγέλιον, φάσκοντα μηδὲν εἴδεναι τοῖς σάρκικοις ἢ Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν καὶ τοῦτον ἐσταυρῶμενον, τοῦτον ποιῆτεον· ἐπὰν δὲ εὑρεθῶσι κατηρτίσμενοι τῷ πνεύματι, καὶ καρποφορούντες ἐν αὐτῷ, ἐρῶντες τοῦ οὐρανίου σοφίας, μεταδοτέον αὐτοῖς τοῦ λόγου, ἐπανέλθοντος ἀπὸ τοῦ σεσαρκῶσθαι, ἐφ' ὃ ἦν ἐν ἀρχῇ πρὸς τὸν Θέον.* Ibid., Vol. II. p. 9.

We learn, from the first two of these extracts, the numerical importance of those who were strangers to the deity of Christ in the time of Origen. They were *the* "MULTITUDE *of those who*" were "*considered to be believers*," and "*the* MULTITUDES *of reputed believers*"; evidently to be reckoned a large amount of people. For the terms here employed, though incapable of giving us a *precise* idea of the number of persons referred to, are unquestionably in favor of the notion of a most extensive though indefinite mass.

We ascertain, from the third quotation, the evasive scheme to which Origen was obliged to have recourse in instructing his scholars, in consequence of their dislike to the notion of the deity of Christ; from which circumstance we derive additional proof, that this doctrine was but imperfectly acknowledged at that period. "*The doctrine of Christ*," he says, "*must be taught both corporeally and spiritually; and when it is necessary, we must preach the corporeal Gospel, saying to the carnal that we* KNOW NOTHING BUT JESUS CHRIST, AND HIM CRUCIFIED *But when persons are found confirmed in the Spirit, bringing forth fruit in it, and in love with heavenly wisdom, we must impart to them the Word returned from his bodily state, to that state (of glory) in which he was in the beginning with God.*" Some people may see no more in this method than an innocent accommodation to the weakness of learners, who should be brought gradually from the simpler to the more sublime topics of religion. But, on the other hand, I think that truth, though it ought to be *explained* by degrees, does not require a studied *concealment* or *denial*, like that of Origen, in limiting at first his confession concerning Christ to what concerned his human nature, when he believed much more on the subject of his divinity. Is not, therefore, the conduct of Origen to be attributed [p. 37] to the falsity of the views which he was promoting? Was not his plan at variance with Apostolical example? And does it not show, in confirmation of the evidence of the two preceding passages, that a strong opposition prevailed on the part of many persons in his time to that mysterious and difficult system, which he and other subtle theologians were endeavoring to instil into the minds of their fellow-Christians?

It appears from a confession of Athanasius, that the number of opponents to Trinitarianism was great, even so late as the

beginning of the fourth century. The following quotation, to this effect, is taken from a work of Athanasius, written against Paul of Samosata, Bishop of Antioch, who had ably promoted Unitarianism, supported by many followers, and attended with much reputation, between the middle and the end of the *third* century.*

He says: It grieves those who stand up for the holy faith, that the MULTITUDE, and especially persons of low understanding, should be infected with these blasphemies (meaning the Unitarian doctrines of Paul of Samosata). Things that are sublime and difficult are not to be apprehended, except by *faith* in God; and persons who are weak in knowledge must fall, if they cannot be persuaded to rest in *faith*, and to avoid curious questions. *On the Incarnation of the Word; against Paul of Samosata.*

Λύπει δὲ καὶ νῦν τοὺς ἀντεχομένους τῆς ἁγίας πιστέως, ἡ περὶ τῶν αὐτῶν βλασφημίων βλάπτουσα, τοὺς πόλλους μάλιστα τοὺς ἠλαττώμενους περὶ τὴν σύνεσιν Τὰ γὰρ μεγάλα καὶ δυσκατάληπτα τῶν πραγματῶν πίστει τῇ πρὸς τὸν Θεὸν λαμβάνεται. Ὅθεν οἱ περὶ τὴν γνῶσιν ἀδυνατοῦντες ἀποπίπτουσιν, εἰ μὴ πείσθειεν ἐμμένειν τῇ πίστει καὶ τὰς περιέργους ζήτησεις ἐκτρεπέσθαι. De Incarnatione Verbi contra Paulum Samosatensem. Opera, Vol. I. p. 591.

To the evidence which I have now adduced, I would add this, that many occasional expressions occur in the works of the polemical divines of the third and fourth centuries, which, in like manner with the extracts already given, bear witness to the existence of opposition to the doctrine of the deity of Christ, such as the following instances. "We may, by this means," says Origen, "solve the doubts of many men who profess great piety, and who are *afraid* of making two Gods," &c.† "Because it is probable that some will be *offended* with our saying that, though the Father is declared to be the only true God, there are other Gods besides him partaking of his divinity."‡ Novatian speaks of the Unitarians of [p. 38] his

* For an account of Paul of Samosata, see page 48.

† *Καὶ τὸ πόλλους φιλόθεους εἶναι εὐχομένους τάρασσον εὐλαβουμένους δύο ἀναγορεύσαι θέους, κ. τ. λ. ἐντεῦθεν λυέσθαι δύναται.* Comment. Vol. II. p. 47.

‡ *Ἀλλ' ἐπεὶ εἰκὸς προσκόψειν τινας τοῖς εἰρημένοις, ἑνὸς μὲν ἀληθινου Θεοῦ τοῦ πάτρος ἀπεγγελλομένου παρὰ δὲ τὸν ἀληθινον Θεὸν θεῶν πλειόνων τῇ μετόχῃ τοῦ Θεοῦ γινομένων.* Id. ibid.

time as "*scandalized* at the doctrine of Christ's deity."* Eusebius, in his controversy with Marcellus,† says: "If this makes them *apprehensive* lest we should seem to introduce two Gods, let them know, that though we do indeed acknowledge the Son to be God, yet there is (absolutely) but one God," &c.‡ "Some, for *fear* of introducing a second God, make the Father and the Son the same." § "Marcellus, for *fear* of saying that there are two Gods, denies the Son to be a separate person." ‖ When we find such expressions as these occurring, and perceive a constant zeal in the innovating party to reconcile together the doctrine of Christ's deity and the belief of one God, to the satisfaction of opponents, we cannot doubt that a strong feeling prevailed among masses of Christians in favor of Unitarianism in the third and fourth centuries. And the inquiring student will discover that this feeling continued to exist till even a much later period, by consulting Dr. Priestley's History of Early Opinions concerning Christ. Vol. III. Book iii. Chap. xvi.¶

It is remarkable, that for a long time the principal point of discussion between the Trinitarian party and their opponents

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* Sed quia obluctantes adversus veritatem semper hæretici sinceræ traditionis, et catholicæ fidei controversiam solent trahere, scandalizati in Christum quod etiam Deus et per scripturas adseratur, et a nobis hoc esse credatur, &c. Cap. 30, p. 115.

† See page 49, for an account of Marcellus.

‡ Εἰ δὲ *φόβον* αὖτοις ἐμποιεῖ, *μήπη* ἄρα δύο θέους ἀναγορεύειν δόξει· ἐνίστωσαν, ὡς, τοῦ υἱοῦ πρὸς ἡμῶν ὁμολογουμένου θεοῦ, εἷς ἂν γενοῖτο μόνος Θέος. De Eccles. Theol. Lib. I. cap. 11.

§ Οἱ δὲ, *φοβῷ* τοῦ δόκειν δεύτερον εἰσηγεῖσθαι θεὸν, τὸν αὐτὸν εἶναι πατέρα καὶ υἱὸν ὁρισάμενοι. Ibid., cap. 3, p 62.

‖ Ὁ μὲν γὰρ, δεεῖ τοῦ μὴ δύο θεοῦς εἰτεῖν, τὴν ἀρνῆσιν τοῦ υἱοῦ προυβάλλετο, τὴν ὑποστάσιν ἀθέτων αὐτοῦ Ibid, cap. 10, p 69.

¶ While here referring to Dr. Priestley, I may state, once for all, how far I have been dependent on his authority in the drawing up of parts of this pamphlet. I am indebted to Dr P. for *nearly* all the extracts from ancient writers which are adduced in this compilation; which extracts I have transcribed from the "History of Early Opinions," referring to those *editions* of the works from which Dr. Priestley took them. But I have not employed Dr. Priestley's *translations* always, and without alteration; nor have I invariably drawn from those premises which he establishes equally bold conclusions. And wherever I have come to a decision as to what view I should support, my judgment has been the result of a comparison of all the historical testimonies within my reach; of a careful attention to each of the quotations, and to their mutual connection and coherence; of an examination, in some cases, of the original authorities; and of a deliberate study of the writings of Dr. Priestley's principal opponents.

was the alleged deity of Christ, without particular reference to the Holy Spirit; notwithstanding that the Spirit's claims, as a necessary though subordinate part of a Trinity, were asserted in some measure, and also opposed, in the time of [p. 39] Tertullian, as the controversy between him and Praxeas has already shown. This important circumstance, viz. the *comparative* neglect of the Holy Spirit till a late period, comes very strikingly under our observation, by means of such allusions as those which I last quoted from ancient writers. These bring to our view the frequent fears which were entertained about the introduction not so much of *three* Gods as of *two* Gods, not so much of a *third* God as of a *second* God, in allusion to the supposed deity of the Son. It is necessary, therefore, that we should come down in our pursuit of ecclesiastical history to the fourth century, in order to meet with keen and angry discussion on the question of the supreme deity of the Holy Spirit.

We then find Basil grievously lamenting the resistance which he encountered in ascribing glory to the Holy Spirit, in connection with the Father and the Son. He complains of his being made the object of persecution on account of this, and that persons were constantly teasing him with questions about the Holy Spirit, not with any view to information, but that, if his answers should not please them, they might have a handle to make war against him.* He represents the zeal of his opponents in a very strong light. "They would sooner," he says, "cut out their tongues than utter this expression (viz. Glory to the Holy Spirit). This is the cause of the most violent and interminable war with us. They say that glory is to be given to God *in* the Holy Spirit, not *to* the Spirit; and they obstinately adhere to this language as expressive of a low opinion concerning him." † "When I was lately praying," he says in another place, "with the people, and sometimes concluding with this doxology,‡ to the Father, *with* the Son *and* the Holy

* Priestley's History of Opinions, Vol. II. p. 327.

† Ἀλλὰ τὰς γλῶσσας ἂν πρόοιντο μᾶλλον ἢ τὴν φωνὴν ταυτὴν δέξαιντο· τοῦτο μὲν οὖν ἔστιν, ὁ τὸν ἀκηρύστον ἡμῖν καὶ ἄσπονδον πόλεμον ἐπεγείρει· ἐν τῷ πνεύματι, φησὶ, τῷ ἁγίῳ τὴν δοξολογίαν ἀποδότεον τῷ Θεῷ, οὐχὶ δὲ καὶ τῷ πνεύματι, καὶ ἐκθυμότατα τῆς φωνῆς ταυτῆς ὡς ταπείνης τοῦ πνεύματος περιέχονται. De Spiritu Sancto, Vol. II. cap. 25, p 337.

‡ Form of praise.

Spirit, and sometimes *through* the Son *in* the Holy Spirit, some who were present objected that I used phrases which were both new and contradictory." * He says that he was accused of novelty, and of being the inventor of new phrases, and that his opponents spared no kind of reproach because he made the Son of God equal to the Father, and did not separate the Spirit from the Son,† that is, as I suppose, in the form of praise.

[p. 40] Gregory Nazianzen, also, has given a similar representation of the state of things connected with the controversy about the Holy Spirit. Speaking of his opponents, he says: "They say, Who ever worshipped the Spirit, either of the ancients, or of the moderns?" ‡ And the objection thus made must have had no small foundation of truth in it, if we consider what Philostorgius the historian has narrated concerning the introduction of the doxology which includes praise to the Son and to the Spirit. It would seem, from what he has recorded, (or I am mistaken,) that Flavianus of Antioch first brought this form into use. "It is said," writes the historian, "that Flavianus of Antioch, having assembled a number of monks, was the first to shout out glory *to* the Father, and *to* the Son, and *to* the Holy Spirit; but that before him, some had said, Glory *to* the Father, *through* the Son, *in* the Holy Spirit, which was the most customary form; and others, glory to the Father, *in* the Son, *and* the Holy Spirit." §

Thus it appears, that not till between the middle and the end of the fourth century was the controversy about the supreme deity of the Holy Spirit awakened and carried on, in

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* Προσευχομένῳ μοι πρώην μετὰ τοῦ λαοῦ, καὶ ἀμφοτέρως τὴν δοξολογίαν ἀποπληροῦντι τῷ Θεῷ καὶ πατρὶ, νῦν μὲν μετὰ τοῦ υἱοῦ συν τῷ πνεύματι τῷ ἁγίῳ, νῦν δὲ διὰ τοῦ υἱοῦ ἐν ἁγίῳ πνεύματι, ἐπέσκηψαν τινὲς τῶν παρόντων, ξενιζοῦσαις ἡμᾶς φωναῖς κεχρήσθαι λέγοντες, καὶ ἅμα πρὸς ἀλλήλαις ὑπεναντίως ἐχοῦσαις. De Spiritu Sancto, Vol. II. p. 293.

† Ὅτι μετὰ πάτρος ἀποπληροῦμεν τῷ μονογενεῖ τὴν δοξολογίαν, καὶ τὸ ἅγιον πνεῦμα μὴ διίστωμεν ἀπὸ τοῦ υἱου· ὅθεν νεωτεροποίους ἡμᾶς καὶ καινοτόμους καὶ ἐφευρέτας ῥημάτων, καὶ τι γὰρ οὐχὶ τῶν ἐπονειδίστων ἀποκάλουσιν. Ibid., cap. 6, pp. 301, 304.

‡ Ἀλλά τις προσεκύνησε τῷ πνεύματι, φῆσι· τίς ἢ τῶν παλαίων, ἢ τῶν νεῶν; Or. 37. Op. p. 599.

§ Ὅτι φῆσι τὸν Ἀντιοχείας Φλαβιάνον πλῆθος μονάχων συναγείραντα πρῶτον ἀναβοήσαι, δόξα πάτρι καὶ υἱῷ καὶ ἁγίῳ πνεύματι· τῶν γὰρ πρὸ αὐτοῦ, τοὺς μὲν, δόξα πάτρι δι' υἱου ἐν ἁγίῳ πνεύματι, λέγειν· καὶ ταύτην μᾶλλον τὴν ἐκφωνῆσιν ἐπιπολάζειν· τοὺς δὲ, δόξα πάτρι ἐν υἱῷ καὶ ἁγίῳ πνεύματι. Philostorgius, Lib. III sect. 15, p. 496.

consequence of some persons being desirous to ascribe glory to him along with the Father and the Son, while others as strenuously refused to join in this adoration. But the ascription of glory to the Holy Spirit, through persevering efforts to establish it, at length became general.

It is not intended that this chapter should contain a complete account, describing every form of opposition to Trinitarianism in ancient times; else I should be obliged to give some detail of the proceedings of the Arian party, from the time of Arius at the commencement of the fourth century. But the Arian controversy is a subject of too great extent for these pages, and is, besides, narrated with more or less fulness in all ecclesiastical histories, to which I refer.

I choose rather to add some information concerning the principal *leaders* and eminent *advocates* of Unitarianism, who rallied this cause at successive periods of antiquity. A few general remarks, which I shall offer, will connect all of them together; after which I shall notice them individually.

I. It appears, that the great principle which was common to all of them, though they arose separately, and are often described in histories of the Church as if the founders of distinct heresies, was a lively attachment to the doctrine of the unity of God. However they may be represented by the ordinary historians, as having invented different erroneous [p. 41] hypotheses to *explain*, or to *explain away* the Trinity, it is certain that they had one characteristic and bond of sympathy, viz. a dislike to the division of the Supreme Being into persons, owing to their strong zeal for the Divine Unity.

II. It appears, that, if they are to be divided into classes, the two heads which follow will include them wholly.

1. The class of those who, in contending for the Divine Unity, accounted for the miraculous power and the immense wisdom of Christ, by affirming that a portion of God's *energy* inspired him; and who maintained likewise that the Holy Spirit was the same *energy*, exerted upon the Apostles and others. In this rank must be placed Artemon, and Theodotus, about the year A. D. 192; Paul of Samosata, Bishop of Antioch, about A. D. 260; Marcellus, Bishop of Ancyra in Galatia, about A. D. 330; Photinus, Bishop of Sirmium in Pannonia, about A. D. 344.*

* These dates, and those which immediately follow, are derived from considerations stated by Dr. Lardner.

2. The class of those who, in asserting equally with the former the strict unity of God, ascribed the high power and wisdom of Jesus Christ to the *personal* presence of God within him; and who said, that the Holy Spirit was another manifestation of the Divine *personal* presence. But, after all, how far could those who held this opinion have differed from the advocates for the former view? For what is the *personal* presence of God in Christ, but the manifestation of the Divine *energy* in him? And what is the Holy Spirit, considered as a third manifestation of the *personal* presence of God, but a third exhibition of his *energy*? Indeed, the defenders of these two opinions, from their similarity, have often been confounded by ancient writers, though not so frequently as they have been distinguished from each other, which is the reason of my present classification. To the second rank belonged Praxeas, about A. D. 196; Noetus, about A. D. 230; and Sabellius, about A. D. 260.

III. It appears, that the explanations which all of these parties, so far as can be known, gave of the introductory verses in St. John's Gospel, concerning the *Word* which was *in the beginning with God*, were the same. These men agreed together in denying that the *Word* was a Divine Intelligence, distinct from the Supreme Father. They affirmed that the *Word* was just the power, wisdom, energy, reason, and will of God, or otherwise God himself. So that when an abundance of divine influence was communicated to Jesus Christ, or (which is not very different) when God personally moved him, the *Word* then *was made flesh, and dwelt among us*, according to the view of those persons. I shall show proof of this having been the interpretation of the ancient Unitarians in my next chapter, when I shall come to consider the object of St. John's writings, in connection with the allegation of Trinitarian divines on that subject.

[p. 42] I proceed with some details concerning the early Unitarian leaders, in their order.

Artemon, Theodotus, A. D. 192. It is not certain which of these two persons *appeared* first, or whether they had separate followers. But it is known that they *flourished* contemporaneously, and that they held exactly the same opinion concerning Christ, viz. that he was a man born of the Virgin Mary.*

* Lardner's Works, Vol. IV. pp. 658, 660.

In defending this opinion, they referred both to the authority of the Apostles, and also to the testimony of the successors of the Apostles in the first and second centuries, as we learn from a work which was written against Artemon in his own time.* The writer of that work, as quoted by the historian Eusebius, thus speaks of Artemon, Theodotus, and others who were their supporters: "They who hold this opinion, that Christ was a mere man, extol its antiquity. For they maintain that all the ancients, and even the Apostles themselves, received and taught the same doctrines which they now defend; and that the truth of the Gospel was preserved till the time of Victor, the thirteenth bishop of Rome from Peter, but that from the time of his successor, Zephyrinus, the truth had been corrupted." † But it must not be thought that Artemon and Theodotus said too much in this, in consequence of Justin Martyr and others having taught the deity of Christ at least half a century before the time of Victor, mentioned in this extract. For most probably the Unitarian advocates, by their claim on antiquity, only meant to say, that the truth of the Gospel, in its purity, had kept the *ascendency* till Victor's time, but that afterwards the corrupted form of it had *gained ground* from the time of Zephyrinus, so as to call for their exertions publicly to oppose its further progress. Theodoret, the historian, confirms this explanation by the following more moderate representation of Artemon's claim. "Artemon," he says, "agreed with us in acknowledging the Supreme Deity, and in owning Him to be the creator of the universe. But he said that our Lord Jesus Christ was a mere man, born of a virgin, and superior in virtue to the prophets. He said that this was the doctrine which the Apostles preached, perverting the sense of

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* Lardner's Works, Vol. I p. 486. Priestley's History of Opinions, Vol. III. pp. 295, 296.

† Τὴν γὰρ τοὶ δεδηλωμένην αἵρεσιν ψιλὸν ἄνθρωπον γινέσθαι τὸν σωτῆρα φάσκουσαν οὐ πρὸ πολλοῦ νεωτερίσθεισαν διευθύνων. Ἐπειδὴ σεμνύνειν αὐτὴν ὡς ἂν ἀρχαῖαν οἱ ταύτης ἤθελον εἰσηγηταί. Φασὶ γὰρ τοὺς μὲν προτέρους ἁπάντας καὶ αὐτοὺς τοὺς ἀποστολοὺς παρειληφέναι τε καὶ δεδιδαχέναι ταύτα, ἃ νῦν οὗτοι λέγουσι· καὶ τετηρήσθαι τὴν ἀληθείαν τοῦ κηρύγματος μέχρι τῶν Βίκτορος χρόνων, ὃς ἦν τρισκαιδέκατος ἀπὸ Πέτρου ἐν Ῥωμῇ ἐπίσκοπος· ἀπὸ δὲ τοῦ διαδόχου αὐτοῦ Ζεφυρίνου παρακεχαράχθαι τὴν ἀλεθείαν. Hist. Lib. V. cap. 28, p. 252.

the sacred Scriptures, but that some * [p. 43] (or those†) who came after them made a God of Christ, who was not God." ‡

Artemon, Theodotus, and their followers, were accused of employing the syllogism in their interpretation of the Scriptures, § as if it were not a virtue, but a crime, to use reasoning, when engaged in the acquisition or declaration of religious truth. They were also charged with studying geometry, and with being admirers of Aristotle and Theophrastus, philosophers, and of Galen the physician, ‖ as if the connection of science and religion was not of advantage to each other, but incompatible; and Trinitarians, as will be shown, borrowed their own system from philosophy, but of that kind which may be described as "science falsely so called."

The Unitarians of the third century were often called Artemonites and Theodotians by their opponents, and the name of Artemon, especially, was remembered after his own time, when Paul of Samosata gave marked publicity to the same opinion concerning Christ. ¶

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* *Some.* Lardner uses this word in his translation of the passage, in Works, Vol. IV. p. 658.

† *Those.* This is the word in Priestley's translation, in Hist. of Opinions, Vol. III. p. 299.

‡ Καὶ Ἀρτέμων δέ τις, ὅν τινες Ἀρτεμᾶν ὀνομάζουσιν, τὰ μὲν κατὰ τὸν τῶν ὅλων Θεὸν παραπλησίως ἡμῖν ἐδόξασεν, αὐτὸν εἰρηκὼς εἶναι τοῦ παντὸς ποιήτην· τὸν δὲ κύριων Ἰησουν Χρίστον ἄνθρωπον εἶπε ψιλὸν, ἐκ παρθένου γεγενήμενον, τῶν δὲ προφήτων ἀρετῇ κρείττονα· ταύτα δὲ καὶ τοὺς ἀποστολοὺς ἔλεγε κεκηρυχέναι, παρερμηνεύων τῶν θεινῶν γραφῶν τὴν διανοίαν, τοὺς δὲ μετ' ἐκεῖνους θεολογήσαι τὸν Χριστὸν οὐκ ὄντα Θεόν. Hist. Fab. Lib. II. cap. 4, p. 220.

§ Lardner, Vol. I. p. 487. ‖ Ibid.

¶ Dr. Lardner (Vol. IV. p. 661) has mentioned several texts of Scripture, which were used by Theodotus in support of his views. They are placed here to show the similarity, so far as it goes, between the proofs used by the ancient Unitarians and those of the modern. See also Priestley's Hist. of Opinions, Vol. III. p. 426, et seq. John viii. 40: *But now ye seek to kill me, a* MAN *that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God.* Deut. xviii. 15: *The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren,* LIKE UNTO ME; *unto him ye shall hearken.* Isaiah liii. 3: *He is despised and rejected of men, a* MAN *of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.* Acts ii. 22: *Ye men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a* MAN *approved of God among you by miracles, and wonders, and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know.* 1 Tim. ii. 5: *For there is One God, and one mediator between God and men, the* MAN *Christ Jesus.* Acts vii. 56: *And (Stephen) said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of* MAN *stand-*

Praxeas, A. D. 186. While Artemon and Theodotus were making a stir at Rome, Praxeas was asserting the unity of God in Africa with much influence and success.* It was the vast number of those who agreed with him in opinion, or with whom he agreed, that induced Tertullian to write [p. 44] that work against him, from which an extract has been produced, showing the multitude of persons who then refused the *Economy* or Trinity, and who adhered to the *Monarchy*, or Divine Unity. In consequence of Praxeas and his followers maintaining that the Deity, or Supreme Father of all, dwelt in the man Jesus Christ, always enabling him to speak and act as he did, their adversaries thought, or feigned to think, that the Supreme Father also *suffered*, according to this view, in the person of our Saviour; and they therefore gave to the Praxeans the name of Patropassians, or persons believing that the Father suffered. But this term was applied to them without just reason, and they rebutted the charge which it expressed.† Nor is it right that this name should be continued in ecclesiastical histories, for it serves the purpose of deception.

Noetus, A. D. 230. Sabellius, A. D. 260. Both these men agreed very much in opinion together, and with Praxeas, their predecessor.‡ The former was of Smyrna, or of Ephesus, in Asia Minor; § the latter was of Pentapolis, a province of Lybia. ‖ They had many followers at the two different times in which they flourished, but more particularly Sabellius, whose doctrine, it is said,¶ was very popular in Africa, in the East, and at Rome. Athanasius had reason to complain, when, on one occasion, he says, "that some bishops of Lybia followed the doctrine of Sabellius, and prevailed to such a degree, that the Son of God was scarce any longer preached in the churches,"** that is, the doctrine concerning Christ as the second person of the Trinity.

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ing on the right hand of God. Theodotus thought that the Son of Man, standing at God's right hand, must have been a very different person from the Supreme Being at whose right hand he stood.

* Lardner, Vol. IV. p. 677.
† Ibid., p. 678.
‡ Ibid., Vol. I. p. 583.
§ Ibid., p. 582.
‖ Ibid., p. 618.
¶ Ibid., pp. 619-620.

** Ἐν Πενταπόλει τῆς ἀνὼ Λιβύης τηνικαῦτα τινες τῶν ἐπισκοπῶν ἐφρόνησαν τὰ Σαβελλιοῦ· καὶ τοσοῦτον ἴσχυσαν ταῖς ἐπινοιαῖς, ὡς ὀλίγου δεῖν μηκέτι ἐν ταῖς ἐκκλησιαῖς κηρυττέσθαι τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ. De Sententia Dionysii. Opera, Vol. I. p. 522.

It may be remarked, as a proof of the zeal of the Sabellians for the unity of God, that Epiphanius has recorded of them, that, when they met other Christians, they would put this shrewd question to them: * "Well, good friends, what is our doctrine? Have we one God, or three Gods?" † They evidently looked upon Trinitarianism as very much the same with a belief in *three Gods.*

The followers of Noetus and Sabellius were, like those of Praxeas, accused of being Patropassians by their adversaries, but with equal unfairness. I cannot, therefore, help mentioning what the French ecclesiastical writer, Beausobre, as quoted by Dr. Lardner, has said in their vindication. He says, that what they were accused of was a doctrine so absurd, and so manifestly contrary to many texts of the New Testament, that it appears [p. 45] scarcely possible that it should be maintained by any reasonable man; which makes him suspect, that this was not the opinion of those persons, but a consequence which the orthodox drew from their principles.‡

Paul of Samosata, A. D. 260. This person was undoubtedly among the most remarkable ecclesiastics of the third century. He was Bishop of Antioch, and enjoyed the patronage of Zenobia, Queen of Palmyra, one of the most excellent of princesses.§ He taught openly, and with great success, the doctrine of the simple humanity of Jesus Christ, declaring him to have been a man eminently favored with the divine grace. ‖ Two councils were assembled at Antioch to consider his case, the first in A. D. 264, and the other in A. D. 269 or 270. In the latter of these councils Paul was excommunicated and deposed. But because he had the favor of Queen Zenobia, and the support of his own people, he retained possession of the episcopal palace till A. D. 272 or 273, when he was expelled by the Emperor Aurelian, who had vanquished Zenobia, and seized upon Antioch.¶

It is certain that Paul was an author; for it is reported of him, that there was scarcely a page of his works without cita-

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* Lardner, Vol. I. p. 619. Priestley's Hist. of Opinions, Vol. III. p. 404.

† Τὴν πνεύσιν αὐτοῖς ὑφηγοῦνται ταύτην· τί ἂν εἴπωμεν, ὦ οἵτοι, ἕνα Θεὸν ἔχομεν, ἢ τρεῖς Θεούς; Haer 62. Opera, Vol. I. p. 514.

‡ Beausobre, as referred to by Lardner, Vol. I. p 584.

§ Lardner, Vol. I. pp. 623, 624. ‖ Ibid., 623. ¶ Ibid

tions from the Old or the New Testament.* His character has been described in a very severe manner by his enemies. But this was probably owing to their jealousy of his powers and popularity, and to the violence of partisanship. Dr. Lardner has drawn a very candid estimate of him, which is worthy of being noted. He says: "As we have not now before us any of Paul's writings, and have his history from adversaries only, we cannot propose to judge *distinctly* of his talents, nor draw his character at length: however, from the several particulars before put down, and collected from divers authors, some things may be concluded; and I apprehend that, laying aside for the present the consideration of his heterodoxy, we shall not mistake much if we conceive of him after this manner. He had a great mind, with a mixture of haughtiness, and too much affection for human applause. He was generally well respected in his diocese, and by the neighboring bishops; in esteem with the great, and beloved by the common people. He preached frequently, and was a good speaker. And from what is said by the fathers of the council, of his rejecting or laying aside some hymns, as modern, and composed by moderns, it may be argued that he was a critic; which is a valuable accomplishment at all times, especially when uncommon." † The Unitarians, on account of Paul's celebrity, were frequently called, after him, Paulians and Paulicians.

Marcellus, A. D. 330. He was Bishop of Ancyra in Galatia, and had [p. 46] been present in the Council of Nice, in A. D. 325. About the year A. D. 334 or 335, he wrote a work against the Arians, in which he stated his views in such a manner, that it was evident he was defending the Unitarian doctrine, in agreement with Paul of Samosata.‡ The bishops who were assembled at Jerusalem, in A. D. 335,§ and who afterwards met at Constantinople, in A. D. 336, deposed Marcellus on account of what they esteemed to be his heresy. He was restored by the Council of Sardica, in A. D. 347. He had many followers, and among others Photinus, who began, soon after his master, to contend with greater zeal for the Unitarian faith.

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* Lardner, Vol. I. p. 628. † Ibid.

‡ Ibid, Vol. II. p. 396.

§ They were the same bishops who readmitted Arius into communion, as stated at page 7.

Photinus, A. D. 344. He was a native of Galatia, and probably of Ancyra, its principal city, where Marcellus was bishop.* He was afterwards made Bishop of Sirmium in Pannonia, where his views attracted notice about A. D. 341 or 343.† He was condemned in a council held at Antioch, about A. D. 344, and in several succeeding assemblies; for ecclesiastical power was at length vested entirely in the hands of the Orthodox and of the Arians. But it was impossible for a time to remove him, on account of the affection of his people towards him, who were unwilling to part with him.‡ At last he was condemned and deposed by a council held at Sirmium, in A. D. 351, after which he was banished. He was subsequently recalled by the Emperor Julian, and again banished by Valentinian. He died in A. D. 375 or 376.§

It is ascertained that Photinus wrote several works, and that he did not cease to teach his doctrine even after his deposition, though the number of persons adhering to this faith must have been gradually on the decline. Photinians, however, are mentioned, and exceptions taken against their views, by writers in the fifth century; ‖ and I have just said (at page 40) that traces of Unitarianism are to be found down to a later period.

Photinus has been described as having entered his bishopric with universal applause, and as having been a man of ready wit, extensive learning, and charming eloquence.¶ He certainly had perfect confidence in the accordance of his views with Scripture, when, on his entering on a public conference with Basil, he declared his readiness to prove his doctrine by a hundred texts.** His views have been well stated by an ancient writer in the following terms: "Photinus holds the unity of God [p. 47] after the Jewish manner. He allows not of any Trinity of persons. He says, that Christ was a man born of Mary. He denies the personality of the Word, and the Spirit. He says, that there is only one God, the Father, and Jesus Christ, whom we ought to serve." ††

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* Lardner, Vol. II. p. 443. † Ibid., p. 444.

‡ Ibid. Nec dum quidem per factionem populi potuit amoveri. — Hilar. Fragm.

§ Lardner, Vol. II. p. 444. ‖ Ibid., p. 447. ¶ Ibid., p. 446.

** Καὶ μέτα καυχήσεως πέρι τῆς ὑποθέσεως ἕκατον μαρτυρίας φέρειν ὁ γεννάδας ἐπηγγείλατο. Epiphanius, apud Lardner, Vol. II. p. 446.

†† Vincent of Lerins, quoted by Dr. Lardner, Vol. II. p. 445.

I do not know any distinguished Unitarian advocate after Photinus, (except one Bonosus, whose followers were called Bonosians, in the beginning of the fifth century,*) till Michael Servetus revived the doctrine, in a certain form, at the period of the Reformation. Servetus was condemned and burned at Geneva, at the instigation of John Calvin, in A. D. 1553 After him, Unitarianism was promoted in Germany, by Laelius and Faustus, both surnamed Socinus, by Crellius, and other eminent men; and in the British islands, (whence it was communicated to America,) with some difference of sentiment, by Biddle, Emlyn, Lindsey, Priestley, Wakefield, Disney, Belsham, and many others.

CHAPTER IV.

Of the Principal Source of Trinitarianism, as alleged by various Ancient Fathers, viz. the Writings of the Apostle John.

This chapter would have been more properly headed, "Of the Principal Source of *the Doctrine of Christ's Deity*, as alleged," &c. But the doctrine of Christ's deity, which innovating Fathers thought that they found in St. John's writings, led also (though not necessarily) to the deification of the Spirit, and thus to the formation of a Trinity of divine persons. So that we are in reality about to examine, in an important sense, the principal alleged foundation of *Trinitarianism*, when entering on the question, whether John taught, or did not teach, the pre-existence and divinity of Christ.

We have evidence concerning many early Trinitarian writers, that they thought that St. John wrote his *Gospel*, and more particularly the introductory verses, in order to make a full declaration of the deity of Jesus Christ. They appear to have believed that the three first Evangelists, viz. Matthew, Mark, and Luke, had given an account of Christ's *humanity;*

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* Lardner, Vol. II. p. 457. Priestley's Hist. of Opinions, Vol. III p. 365

but that John, coming after these, taught his *divinity*, as he was particularly ordained and inspired by God to do. Not that they did not find proofs of the doctrine of Christ's deity in other parts of Scripture. But [p. 48] they said that it was John who first revealed it in an explicit manner, and who, of course, brought them to that way of thinking, which enabled them to find many other proofs in various portions of the Old and New Testaments.

It seems, also, to have been thought by Tertullian, and the idea is often repeated by modern Trinitarians, that St. John, in his *First Epistle*, when he spoke of Antichrist, alluded, in connection with another class of persons, to those who refused to acknowledge the deity of Jesus Christ. It has been affirmed that John's frequent commendations of a belief in "the Son of God" were penned on account of the Unitarians of his time, who (as it has been alleged) did not confess Jesus to be the Son of God.

I shall show that this view, both of St. John's *Gospel* and of his *First Epistle*, is incorrect.

I. OF ST. JOHN'S GOSPEL.

Let us observe some specimens of the high esteem in which this Gospel was held, in consequence of its having been thought to reveal plainly the doctrine of Christ's deity, before we inquire into its real character.

"No one," says Origen, "taught the divinity of Christ so clearly as John, who has presented him to us as saying, 'I am the light of the world,' &c. We may, therefore, boldly affirm, that as the Gospels are the first fruits (or the most excellent part) of the Scriptures, so the Gospel of John is the first fruits (or the most excellent part) of the Gospels." * "John," says Eusebius, "began (his Gospel) with the doctrines of the divinity of Christ, that having been reserved for him as the most worthy." †

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* Οὐδεὶς γὰρ ἐκείνων ἄκρατως ἐφανέρωσεν αὐτοῦ τὴν θεότητα ὡς Ἰωάννης, παράστησας αὐτὸν λέγοντα, Ἐγὼ εἰμι τὸ φῶς τοῦ κόσμου, κ. τ. λ. τολμητέον τοίνυν εἰπειν ἀπάρχην μὲν πασῶν γραφῶν εἶναι τὰ εὐαγγέλια, τῶν δὲ εὐαγγελίων ἀπάρχην τὸ κατὰ Ἰωάννην. Comment. in Johan. Vol. II. p. 5.

† Τῆς δὲ θεολογίας ἀπαρξάσθαι, ὡς ἂν αὐτῷ πρὸς τοῦ θείου πνεύματος οἷα κρείττονι παραπεφυλαγμένης. Hist. Lib. III. cap. 24, p. 117.

The following account is given by Epiphanius: "Wherefore the blessed John coming, and finding men employed about the humanity of Christ, &c., as coming last, for he was the fourth to write a Gospel, begins, as it were, to call back the wanderers, and those who were employed about the humanity of Christ, and to say to them, Whither are you going? Whither are you walking, who tread a rough and dangerous path? &c. It is not so. The God, the Word, which was begotten of the Father from above, is not from Mary only. He is not from the time of Joseph, he is not from the time of Salathiel, and Zorobabel, and David, and Abraham, and Jacob, and Noah, and Adam; but "in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."*

[p. 49] "If you inquire," says Ambrose, "concerning his (Christ's) celestial generation, read the Gospel of St. John." †

"John the Apostle whom Jesus loved," says Jerome, "wrote his Gospel the last of all, at the entreaty of the bishops of Asia, against Cerinthus, and other heretics, and especially the doctrine of the Ebionites, then gaining ground, who say that Christ had no being before he was born of Mary, whence he was compelled to declare his divine origin." ‡

"If there be any other things," says Austin, "which intimate to the intelligent the divinity of Christ, in which he is equal to the Father, John almost alone has introduced them

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* Διὸ καὶ Ἰωάννης ἐλθὼν ὁ μακαρίος, καὶ εὗρων τοὺς ἀνθρωποὺς ἠσχολημένους περὶ τὴν κάτω Χριστοῦ παρουσίαν, κ. τ. λ. ὡς κατόπιν ἐλθὼν, τέταρτος γὰρ οὗτος εὐαγγελλίζεται, ἀρχέται ἀνακαλεῖσθαι ὡς εἰπειν, τοὺς πλανηθέντας, καὶ ἠσχολημένους περὶ τὴν κάτω Χριστοῦ παρουσίαν, καὶ λέγειν αὐτοῖς, κ. τ. λ Ποῖ φέρεσθε, ποῖ βαδίζιτε, οἱ τὴν τραχειὰν ὅδον καὶ σκανδαλωδῆ καὶ εἰς χάσμα φερούσαν βαδιζόντες; Ανακάμψατε. Οὐκ ἐστὶν οὑτῶς, οὐκ ἐστὶν ἀπὸ Μαρίας μόνον ὁ Θεὸς λόγος, ὁ ἐκ πάτρος ἄνωθεν γεγεννήμενος, οὐκ ἐστὶν ἀπὸ τῶν χρόνων Ἰωσὴφ τοῦ ταῦτης ὁρμάστου, οὐκ ἐστὶν ἀπὸ τῶν χρόνων Σαλαθιὴλ, καὶ Ζοροβαβὴλ, καὶ Δαβὶδ, καὶ Ἀβράαμ, καὶ Ἰακὼβ, καὶ Νῶε, καὶ Ἀδὰμ, ἀλλ' ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος, καὶ ὁ λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν Θεὸν, καὶ Θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος. Haer. 69. Opera, Vol. I. p. 747.

† At vero de cælesta generatione si quæris, lege evangelium sancti Joannis. Opera, Vol. II. p. 26.

‡ Joannes apostolus quem Jesus amavit plurimum etc. novissimus omnium scripsit evangelium, rogatus ab Asiæ episcopis, adversus Cerinthum, aliosque hæreticos et maxime tunc Ebionitarum dogma consurgens, qui asserunt Christum ante Mariam non fuisse, unde et compulsus est divinam ejus naturam edicere. Op. Vol. I. p. 273.

into his Gospel." "With open voice he declares that he is God, and always with God, laying open the mystery of God."*

John, says Chrysostom, "alone taught the eternal and supercelestial wisdom."† He "first lighted up the lamp of theology; and all the most distant churches, running to it, lighted up their lamps of theology, and returned rejoicing, saying, *In the beginning was the Word.*"‡ Chrysostom represents the other sacred writers as persons who resembled "little children, hearing, but not understanding what they heard, being engaged about cheese-cakes and childish sports";§ while he says of John, that he taught "what the angels themselves did not know before he declared it."‖ Of the other three Evangelists he says: "They all treated of the [p. 50] fleshly dispensation, and silently, by his miracles, indicated his (Christ's) worth. But the dignity of the Word of God was hid, the arrows against the heretics were concealed, and the fortification to defend the right faith was not raised by the pious preaching. John, therefore, the Son of Thunder, being the last, advanced to the doctrine of the Word."¶ "'*In the beginning was the Word.*' This doctrine was not published at first, for the world would not receive it. Wherefore Matthew, Mark, and Luke began at a distance. When they began the preaching, they did not immediately state what was becoming his dignity, but what would

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* Et si qua alia sunt quæ Christi divinitatem, in qua æqualis est Patri, recte intelligentibus intiment, pene solus Johannes in evangelio sui posuit: tanquam de pectore ipsius Domini, super quod discumbere in ejus convivio solitus erat, secretum divinitatis ejus uberius et quodammodo familiarius biberit. Opera, Vol. IV. p. 374.

† Μόνος τὴν αἰώνιον καὶ ὑπερκόσμιον φιλοσοφίαν κηρύξας. Op. Vol. VI. p 235.

‡ Πρῶτη ἀνάψασα τὸν τῆς θεολογίας λύχνον, πᾶσαι τῶν περάτων αἱ ἐκκλησίαι πρὸς σε δραμοῦσαι, ἕκαστη τὴν ἑαυτῆς λάμπαδα τὴν θεολογίαν ἄνηψε, καὶ ὑπέστρεψε χαίρουσα, ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος. Ibid. p. 604.

§ Οἱ γὲ ἄλλοι ἅπαντες, καθάπερ τὰ παιδία τὰ μικρὰ, ἀκούουσι μὲν, οὐχ ἰσᾶσι δὲ ἅπερ ἀκούουσιν, ἀλλὰ περὶ πλακοῦντας ἐπτοιήνται, καὶ ἀθύρματα παιδικά. Op. Vol. VIII. p. 2.

‖ Ἃ μηδὲ ἄγγελοι πρὶν ἢ τοῦτον γένεσθαι ἤδεισαν. Ibid.

¶ Πάντες οὖν ἐχώρησαν εἰς τὴν τῆς σαρκὸς οἰκονομίαν, καὶ ἤρεμα πῶς, διὰ τῶν θαυμάτων, ἐγνώριζον τὴν ἀξίαν. Ἐκρύπτετο δὲ ἔτι τοῦ Θεοῦ λόγου ἀξίωμα. Ἐκρύπτετο δὲ σὰ κατὰ τῶν αἱρετικων βελῆ, καὶ τὸ τῆς ὀρθῆς δοξῆς ἐπιτείχισμα οὐδέποτε τῷ κηρύγματι τῆς εὐσεβείας ἐγήγερτο. Ἰωάννης τοίνυν, ὁ υἱὸς τῆς βρόντης, τελευταῖος, παρῆλθεν ἐπὶ τὴν θεολογίαν. Op. Vol. VI. p. 173.

suit their hearers. John, therefore, the Son of Thunder, last of all, advanced to the doctrine of his divinity." *

Paulinus says: "This same (John), at an advanced age, is said to have been the last to write his Gospel, the last, judging by the time of his book, but otherwise the first, since he alone, of the four rivers (the Evangelists), takes his course from the highest fountain of the Divine mind, and thunders from above, 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.'" †

Theophylact, speaking of John as beginning with the divinity of Christ, says: "For whereas the others had made no mention of his existence as the Word of God before the ages, he taught that doctrine, lest the Word of God should have been thought to be a mere man." ‡ He says that John wrote "lest men should think that Christ first came into existence when he was born of Mary, and that he was not begotten of the Father before the ages." §

I will only add to this evidence, that St. John received from some of [p. 51] the Fathers the title of *Theologos*, or *Divine*, from his supposed zeal for the pre-existence and divinity of Christ. ‖ This appellation, applied to John, will be observed by the readers of the common English Bible, on opening the book of Revelation, which will be found to be entitled, "The Revelation of St. John the *Divine*."

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* Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος· οὐκ εὐθὺς τοῦτο ἐκηρύχθη. Οὐ γὰρ ἐχώρει ὁ κόσμος· μακρὰν ἡμῖν οἱ εὐαγγελίσται Μάτθαιος, Μαρκὸς, Λούκας, ὅτε ἤρξαντο τοῦ κηρύγματος, οὐκ εὐθὺς ἐλάλησαν τὰ πρέποντα τῇ ἀξιᾷ, ἀλλὰ τὰ ἁρμόζοντα τοῖς ἀκροωμένοις. Ἰωάννης τοίνυν ὁ υἱὸς τῆς βρόντης τελευταίος παρῆλθεν ἐπὶ τὴν θεολογίαν. — Op. Vol. VI p. 171.

† Idem ultra omnium tempora apostolorum, ætate producta, postremus evangelii scriptor fuisse memoratur, etc., ultimus auctor, in libri tempore, sed primus in capite sacramenti, quippe qui solus è quatuor fluminibus ex ipso summo divini capitis fonte decurrens, de nube sublimi tonat: In principio erat verbum, et verbum erat apud Deum, et Deus erat verbum. Ad. Amandum, p. 213.

‡ Ἐπεὶ γὰρ οἱ ἄλλοι οὐκ ἐμνήσθησαν περὶ τῆς πρὸ αἰώνων ὑπάρξεως τοῦ Θεοῦ λόγου, αὐτὸς ἐθεολόγησε περὶ ταύτης, ἵνα μὴ νομισθείη ὁ τοῦ Θεοῦ λόγος ψιλὸς ἄνθρωπος εἶναι. In Matt. Pref. I pp. 1, 2.

§ Δέος μὲν ἦν μὴ πότε τινες χαμαιπέτεις καὶ μηδὲν ὑψηλὸν νόησαι δυναμένοι, νομίζωσι τὸν χριστὸν τότε πρῶτον εἰς ὕπαρξιν ἔλθειν ὅτε ἀπὸ Μαρίας ἐγγενήθη, καὶ οὐχὶ πρὸ αἰώνων ἐκ τοῦ Πάτρος γενεθῆναι. In Johan. c. i. Vol. I. p. 553.

‖ Priestley's Early Opinions, Vol. III. pp. 123 124. Cave's Lives of the Apostles, p. 127, Lond. 1694.

It is the *Introduction* to St. John's Gospel that has been made the principal ground of the opinion, that the Apostle wrote to prove the deity of Christ. We may, therefore, properly confine our observations to this point: "In the beginning was the Word," &c.

And, in objection to the view of the Trinitarian Fathers, I would put a simple question, — Why did not John, if he meant to declare plainly the deity of Jesus Christ, introduce his Gospel with saying, "In the beginning was the *Son*, and the *Son* was with the Father, and the *Son* was God as well as the Father," instead of speaking of the "Word," which, to say the least of it, *might* be supposed to signify only the voice of God, even the word of his power? Why did he not, had he been anxious to supply the deficiency of evidence for the deity of Christ in the other evangelical histories, state distinctly that his Master had pre-existed as God the Son, in eternal communion with the Father and the Spirit? This would have placed the doctrine of Christ's deity beyond the reach of controversy. But this John has certainly not done; nor can his language be fairly construed into anything that approaches this meaning.

But the true design of St. John's Introduction can be shown. I think that the Apostle had two ends in view in it. First, to ascribe very high dignity to Jesus Christ, as the person in whom the word of God's wisdom and power dwelt, even that word which from eternity belonged to God, and was God himself; by which all things were created; and in which light and life were contained. And, secondly, to confute the errors of a certain philosophy prevalent at the time that he wrote, viz. that, besides God, there were other divine beings, such as the "Creator of the universe," the "Word," the Eon "Light," and the Eon "Life," &c.* In reply to this, but in an indirect manner, John has declared, that the Word, and the Creator, and God himself, are the same, because it was through means of the "word" that all things were *created*, and this "word" belonged to God, and was God himself. It is added, that light was in the "word," and that this light was the life of men, in opposition to the notion of divine Eons, who were called "Light," "Life," &c.

Both of these objects must be taken into view, in order to explain satisfactorily St. John's Introduction.

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* Michaelis, Introduction to the New Testament, Marsh's trans., Vol. III. Part I. ch. 7, sect. 5.

THE INTRODUCTORY VERSES

Viz. CHAP. I. v

Translation in the Common English Bible.	Interpretation of Trin
In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2. The same was in the beginning with God. 3. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made. 4. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. 5. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. 6. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. 7. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe. 8. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. 9. That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. 10. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. 11. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. 12. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: 13. Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. 14. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth. 15. John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me; for he was before me. 16. And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace. 17. For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. 18. No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.	In the beginning (or from eter and God the Son existed with Go Son was divine even as the Fat the beginning existed with Goo things were made by him; and anything made that was made. and the life was the light of m shineth in darkness; and the da from its lustre. 6. A man was name was John. 7. The same testify of the Light (God the through him might believe. 8. but was sent to testify of that Li true Light, which lighteth every the world. 10. He (the Light, in the world, and the world was world knew him not. 11. He ca and his own received him not. as received him he gave power God, even to those who believ Who were born, not of blood, flesh, nor of the will of man, God the Son united himself to thus tabernacled among us; fu and we beheld his glory, the gl gotten of the Father. 15. John cried, saying, This was he of wh cometh after me is preferred to fore me (as a member of the Divi of his fulness we all have receive 17. For the law was given by truth came by Jesus Christ. 1 God at any time; the only beg in mysterious connection with made him known.

* Psalm xxxiii. 6, "By the *word* of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them — xxxiii. 9, "For he *spake* and it was done, he *commanded* and it stood fast."

† 2 Cor. iv. 6, "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined i Christ." 'Lighted.' Dr. Carpenter has suggested this emendation (in which he is followed b Mr. Belsham's Calm Inquiry, p. 35.

‡ The land of the Jews, a people to whom, at successive periods, the light of God's word h was manifested in Jesus Christ.

§ There is reason in believing that by the term 'only begotten,' μονογένης, which John ap and Luke never call Jesus the *only begotten*, but the *beloved* Son of God, while John never ca were used to denote the same thing. See other reasons for this in Mr. Belsham's Calm Inquiry

To face page 56.

...ns.	Another Translation and Interpretation.
...was God the Son, ...e Father, and the 2. The same in ...e Father. 3. All ...out him was not ...Life was in him; 5. And the light ...ss hath not taken ...from God, whose ...e for a witness to ...), that all men ...as not that Light, 9. That was the ...that cometh into ...od the Son) was ...e by him, and the ...unto his own land, ...But to as many ...come the sons of ...n his name. 13. ...f the will of the ...f God. 14. And ...uman body, and ...grace and truth; ...s of the only be- ...ified of him, and ...I spake, He that ...for he existed be- ...rinity). 16. And ...l grace for grace. ...s, but grace and ...man hath seen ...Son, who exists ...Father, he hath	In the beginning (or from eternity) was the word of supreme wisdom and power, and this word belonged to God, and this word was God himself. 2. The same in the beginning (or from eternity) belonged to God. 3. All things were made through means of it, and without it was not anything made that was made.* 4. Life was in it; and the life was the light of men. 5. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness hath not taken from its lustre. 6. A man was sent from God, whose name was John. 7. The same came for a witness to testify of the light, that all men through means of it might believe. 8. He was not the bearer of the light, but was sent to testify of the light. 9. The true light was that which coming into the world lighteth every man. 10. It was in the world, and the world was lighted † by it, and the world knew it not. 11. It came unto its own land,‡ and its own received it not. 12. But on as many as received it, it conferred power to become the sons of God, even on those who believed on its name (or on His name, that is, God). 13. Who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. 14. Now the word took possession of a human being, and thus tabernacled among us, full of grace and truth; and we beheld the glory of this being, the glory as of an only begotten § of the Father. 15. John testified of him, and cried, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred to me, for he was appointed to be my superior. 16. And of his fulness we all have received, and grace for grace. 17. For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. 18. No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten § Son, who is in the secret counsel of the Father, he hath made him known.

...he breath of his mouth." — cxlviii. 5, "For he *commanded*, and they were created."

...hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus ... Belsham), supplying the word πεφωτισμενος after εγενετο, in the Greek text. See

...en communicated, but who in great numbers despised and rejected this light, as it

...o Christ, he meant nothing more than 'beloved,' αγαπητος. For Matthew, Mark, ...n the *beloved*, but the *only begotten*; which makes it probable that both expressions ...59.

[p 52] If we look only to the *last* object, viz. that John wished to confute a certain pernicious philosophy, prevalent in his time, without having also another intention, we detract from his character as an Evangelist. For an Evangelist should not be thought to have written any part of his history of Christ for the benefit of his own time only, but also for succeeding generations, though he might confute temporary errors by oral admonition or by epistle. On this account Dr. Lardner cannot be persuaded that John wrote in any way in his Gospel against errors of his time.* But this is going too far on the other side; for John might thus write in an *indirect* manner, having another more direct object in view, viz. the declaration of the dignity of Christ as the bearer of the word of God; and this is what I believe him to have done.

On the other hand, if we reflect only on the *first* object, viz. that John wished to ascribe dignity to Christ, as the bearer of the word of God, (without taking his other intention in view,) it may be asked why the Apostle uses such a string of terms as "the word," "light," "the life," "darkness," &c., and why he uses them without explanation, bringing them in abruptly? To account for this, I must suppose that John intended (indirectly) the confutation of certain errors where, as we shall show, this phraseology was employed.

These remarks prepare the way for a more full consideration of St. John's Introduction under the two aspects now mentioned. I need only further premise, that the terms "he" and "him," used in connection with the "*word*," in the common English Bible, must be changed into "it," in order to suit my interpretation. But this is lawful; for those Greek terms, which, in the common Bible, are here translated "he" and "him," may with equal propriety be rendered "it"; nor is there any reason why the latter translation should not be preferred, if it be necessary to the sense.†

I. Viewing John, then, in the first place, as having intended to begin his history of Christ with an account of his dignity, as the bearer of the word of God, the following observations are warranted.

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* Lardner's Works, Vol. III. pp. 239, 240.

† Principal Campbell has employed the pronoun "it" in his translation of verses 2, 3. 4, and 5; and this liberty he has ably defended. See his work on the Four Gospels, Vol. II. p. 407, Vol. III. p. 282.

1. The expressions in the two first verses, "the word was with God," or belonged to him, and "the word was God" himself, though at first they seem strange according to this view, (but they are much more strange according to the Trinitarian view,) will appear sufficiently natural on a little examination. An American writer has given a parallel case, which, so far as I can remember, is as follows: "In the beginning of the war of *Independence*, there was a hope to America, and that hope was *with* Washington, and that hope *was* Washington." Here the same person is said [p. 53] to have had the hope of American freedom lodged *with* him, and to have been himself that very hope; a method of expression which does not differ in the least from that in John's Introduction. And the Apostle has used similar language in other parts of his writings: "Love is *of* God," and "God *is* love." 1 John iv. 7, 8. "As he (God) is *in* the light," and "God *is* light." 1 John i. 7, and i. 5.

2. Various texts of the Old Testament may be brought to illustrate St. John's statements concerning the word, supposing him to have meant simply the word of God's wisdom and power. Is it said by John that this word was in the beginning (or from eternity) with God? We find in Psalm cxix. 89, "For ever, O Lord, thy *word* is settled in heaven," that is, the word of God's omnipotence, which endures from eternity to eternity. Is it declared that all things were made through means of the word? We find in Psalms xxxiii. 6, "By the *word* of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth"; cxlviii. 5, "For he *commanded*, and they were created"; xxxiii. 9, "For he *spake* and it was done, he *commanded* and it stood fast." Is it said that the word contained light, and that this light came unto its own land? It is the land of the Jews which is referred to, a land which had been favored in a most peculiar manner with the presence of God's word, and with the light thereof: "The *word* of the Lord that came to Jeremiah," "the *word* of the Lord came expressly to Ezekiel," "the *word* of the Lord that came unto Hosea," "the *word* of the Lord that came unto Joel," &c.; and we read in Psalm cxlvii. 16, "He showeth his *word* unto Jacob, his statutes and his judgments unto Israel."

3. By regarding the Evangelist as having meant by the "word," not a being or person existing from eternity, and then uniting with Jesus Christ, but simply the word of God's

wisdom and power, which enabled Jesus Christ, being a man, to speak and act like one having divine authority, we reconcile St. John's testimony with that of the other Evangelists. These describe Jesus merely as a man, who ate and drank, who was hungered and fatigued, who suffered, died, and was buried, and who derived all his knowledge and power from God. Now why should John be thought to have revealed more than this? to have taught that Christ was the second person of a three-one God? an eternally existing Divinity? Why should the testimonies of Matthew, Mark, and Luke be stigmatized as grossly imperfect by the *hypothesis*, that it was left to John to exhibit a most important discovery concerning Christ, which *they* had almost or altogether forgotten to mention?

4. The view which I have given of the "word" of God agrees with what John has himself *declared* concerning the object of his Gospel. John xx. 30, 31, "And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the *Christ*, the *Son* of God; and that, believing, [p. 54] ye might have life through his name." He does not say, that he wrote to prove that Jesus pre-existed as God the Word, or God the Son, equal to God the Father, but only to show that he was the *Christ*, or anointed of God, and the *Son* of God, being the object of his choice and affection, obedient to his will, and fulfilling the offices to which he had raised him. Nor can it be said that the title "*Son* of God," (a very different title from "*God* the Son,") conveys the notion of Christ's *deity*. It seems to have been used as much the same with the epithet "Christ." When our Lord asked his disciples whom they thought him to be? we learn from *Mark* (viii. 29), that "Peter answereth and saith unto him, Thou art the *Christ*." According to *Luke* (ix. 20), "Peter answering said, The *Christ of God*." While by *Matthew's* account (xvi. 16), "Peter answered and said, Thou art the *Christ*, the *Son* of God." Either the three Evangelists have given reports that are at variance, or we must reconcile them by supposing that "the *Christ*," "the *Christ of God*," and "the *Christ*, the *Son* of the living God," are nearly equivalent expressions. Luke xxii. 67: "Art thou the *Christ?* tell us." 70: "Art thou then the *Son* of God?" Mark i. 1: "The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus *Christ*, the *Son* of God." Luke

iv. 41: "Thou art *Christ*, the *Son* of God." John i. 49: "Thou art the *Son* of God; thou art the *King of Israel*." In all these cases I have no doubt that the epithets "*Christ*," "*Son* of God," and "*King of Israel*" had a very close similarity of meaning.

5. That the "word" mentioned by John had no personality distinct from God himself, but was simply his word of power, was the opinion of the ancient Unitarians, as I before mentioned (p. 44). Tertullian confesses that it was the case with *Praxeas*, who would not allow the "word" to be distinct from the Father, but asked, "What is a word but an expression, and the sound of the voice?" * Hippolytus, writing against *Noetus*, says, "But you will tell me, that I am mentioning something *strange*, when I call the 'word' the Son." † Ambrose says that "the error of *Sabellius* lay in making the Father and the 'word' to be the same." ‡ Epiphanius connects together *Noetus*, *Sabellius*, and *Paul of Samosata*, as believing that the "word" had no existence distinct from God. Referring to Paul of Samosata, he says, "He maintained that the 'word' of God and the 'spirit' of God had always existed in God, just as reason exists in the heart of man, which was also the opinion of Sabellius, Noetus, [p. 55] and others." § Eusebius, writing against *Marcellus*, says, that "he acknowledged the 'word,' but confessed it to be a *mere word*, like the word of any man, but not the living and personal Son." ‖ Chrysostom says, that "*Marcellus* and *Photinus* said that the word of God was the *energy* of God, not a personal existence,

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* Non vis enim eum substantivum habere in re per substantiæ proprietatem, ut res et persona quadam videri possit, et ita capiat secundus a Deo constitutus, duos efficere, Patrem et Filium, Deum et sermonem. Quid est enim dices sermo, nisi vox, et sonus oris? Ad Prax. cap. vii. p. 638. Ap. Lardner, Vol. IV. p. 678.

† Ἀλλ' ἔρει μοι τίς· ξένον φέρεις, λόγον λέγων νίόν. Hipp. contr. Noet. p. 16.

‡ Neque, ut Sabellius, Patrem confundamus et Verbum. Ambrose, apud Lardner, Vol. I. p 619.

§ Ἓν Θεῷ δὲ ἀεὶ ὄντα τὸν αὐτοῦ λόγον, καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα αὐτοῦ, ὥσπερ ἐν ἄνθρωπου καρδιᾷ ὁ ἴδιος λόγος· μὴ εἶναι δὲ τὸν νἱὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐνυπόστατον, ἀλλὰ ἐν αὐτῷ Θεῷ ὥσπερ ἀμέλει καὶ ὁ Σαβέλλιος, καὶ ὁ Ναύατος, καὶ ὁ Νόητος, καὶ ἄλλοι. Vol. I. p. 608.

‖ Ψίλον γὰρ, καὶ τῷ ἀνθρωπείῳ λόγῳ ὅμοιον, οὐχὶ δὲ νἱὸν ἀληθῶς ζῶντα καὶ ὑφεστῶτα, τὸν χρίστον εἶναι ὁμολογεῖν ἐθέλει. Euseb. contr. Marcellum, Lib. I. p. 19.

and that this (energy) entered into the descendant of David." * Epiphanius also represents *Photinus* as acknowledging that "the word of God existed from the beginning, but that it was not the Son begotten of God." †

The notice here of these opinions is useful, in so far as it shows the antiquity of the view which I have been explaining, and the harmony and consistency of early Unitarianism.

II. Let us consider the Introduction in a second point of view, as directed against a pernicious species of philosophy prevalent at the time of its composition. I refer to the philosophy of the *Gnostics*, being a class of persons who derived their name from their pretensions to communicate to mankind the true *gnosis* ‡ or knowledge of the Supreme Being, of the origin of evil, and of all that concerned the existence, conduct, and happiness of men.

It is not material to our present study to know whether this sect of persons, when John wrote his Gospel (about A. D. 68), § consisted altogether of *heathens*, or included also a body of *Christians*. But it is my opinion that there were Christian Gnostics at that period, because there are allusions to such persons in epistles written by Paul before John drew up his history. ‖

It was the basis of the Gnostic philosophy, that all *matter* was *essentially evil*, and an annoyance to what was spiritual; but that God, on the other hand, was a benevolent Being, *perfectly free from evil*. ¶

That John, in an indirect manner, combated this philosophy, is proved by three considerations.

1. The terms which he uses, as the "word," "light," "the life," were, as [p. 56] I have said, terms which were employed as the common phraseology among the Gnostics. We do not find such a string of terms in the other Gospels. But John, liv-

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* Μάρκελλος ὁ Γαλάτης, καὶ Φώτεινος, καὶ Σωφρόνιος ἔλεγον τὸν λόγον τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐνεργείαν εἶναι, οὐκ οὐσίαν ἐνυπόστατον· ταύτην δι' ἐνοικῆσαι τὸν ἐκ σπέρματος Δάβιδ. Opera, Vol. II. p. 591.

† Καὶ αὐτὸς φημὶ εἶναι τὸν λόγον ἀπ' ἀρχῆς, ἀλλ' οὐχ' υἱὸν Θεοῦ γεγεννήμενον, κ. τ. λ. Epip. Opera, p 831.

‡ Mosheim, Vol. I. p. 85. § Lardner, Vol. III. p. 229.

‖ Col. ii. 8; 1 Tim. vi. 20; 1 Tim. i. 4; Titus iii. 9; 2 Tim. ii. 18; 1 Cor. xv. 12, &c.

¶ Mosheim, Vol. I. p. 86.

ing at Ephesus, where these words had been brought into notice, doubtless took them up in order to oppose the philosophy of which they were the nomenclature.*

2. Several positions which John lays down are *actually* in antithesis to positions of the Gnostics.

(1.) The Gnostics entertained the idea of a Divine Being distinct from God and inferior to him, called the "word." In opposition to this, John declares that the word was *not* a distinct being, but *belonged* to God, and was God himself.

(2.) As a consequence of their fundamental doctrine, that all matter is essentially evil, while God is a being of perfect benevolence, the Gnostics held a peculiar opinion concerning *creation*. They said that creation was not the work of God himself, but of a being less perfect than God,† who might, consistently with his imperfect nature, employ himself in the composition and arrangement of material objects, (which were all essentially evil,) a work in which the all-benevolent God could not properly engage. In opposition to this view of a Creator different from God, the Almighty Father, John declares that it was God himself who made all things through means of his own word of power.

(3, 4.) It was a part of the Gnostic philosophy that there were various Eons, or Emanations from the Supreme Mind, two of which were called Life and Light.‡ In reply to this, we are informed by John, that whatever was understood by life lay entirely *in* the word of God, and that this life was the light of men, there being no distinct Eons bearing these names.

(5.) The Gnostics probably had some peculiar tenet concerning darkness.§ If they had, John turns aside their opinion by stating that what he knew about the darkness amounted simply to its not having detracted from the lustre of the light of God.

Professor Michaelis has carried out this view of *counter positions* to the Gnostic philosophy to a very considerable length in his Introduction to the New Testament. My readers must consult this work, if they wish to decide for themselves how far further this view ought to be extended.‖

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* Michaelis, Vol. III. Part I. p. 279 et seq. Priestley, Ear. Op. Vol. I. p. 181.

† Mosheim, Vol. I. p. 86. Michaelis, Vol. III. Part I. p. 291.

‡ Michaelis, pp. 292, 293. § Ibid., p. 299. ‖ Ibid., pp. 287 – 302.

Notice, however, must be taken here of a statement which John has made, which is not opposed to the Gnostics in general, but to another class, who may have been tinged in some points with this philosophy. "He (John the Baptist) was not that light," or the bearer of that light. Ver. 8. Had any one said that John the Baptist *was* that light? It [p. 57] appears so. It appears that a body of men then existed, who believed in John the Baptist as the Messiah, or light of the world.* Against these the Evangelist probably penned verse 8th. This sect, who were called Sabians, which signifies Baptists, are still in existence in the East, holding their peculiar faith.†

3. We have the testimony of *Irenæus*, that John wrote against the Gnostics in his Introduction. I stated (p. 19) that this Father was the disciple of Polycarp, one of John's immediate followers (p. 16). He believed the deity of Christ, but confessed him to have been inferior to God, his Father (pp. 19, 20). But this belief, whether it induced him or not *always* to attach personality to the "word" in John's Introduction, does not weaken his testimony to its having been composed in opposition to the Gnostics, for he might have his own view as to the manner of opposition. Irenæus says: "John, the disciple of the Lord, desiring by the publication of his Gospel to root out the error which had been sown among men by Cerinthus,‡ and some time before by those who are called Nicolaitans, § who are a branch of that science, which is falsely so called, that he might confute them, and satisfy all that there is one God, who made all things by his word, and not, as they say, one who is the Creator of the universe, and another the Father of the Lord, &c., &c.; the disciple, therefore, of the Lord, wishing to cut off these errors, and to appoint a rule of truth in the Church, that there is One God Almighty, who by his word made all things, visible and invisible; declaring also that by the word by which God finished the creation, by the same word he bestowed salvation upon those who were in the creation, begins his doctrine which is according to the Gospel, 'In the beginning was the word,'" &c. ‖

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* Michaelis, Vol. III. Part I. pp. 285, 294, et seq.

† Ibid., pp 285, 287.

‡ A leader among the Gnostics. § Gnostics.

‖ Hanc fidem annuntians Joannes Domini discipulus, volens per evangelii annuntiationem auferre eum, qui a Cerintho inseminatus erat hominibus errorem, et multo prius ab his qui dicuntur Nicolaitæ, qui sunt

II. OF ST. JOHN'S FIRST EPISTLE.

In mentioning the opinion that John penned certain expressions in his *First Epistle* against Unitarians, I do not mean to say that this view concerning these expressions was entertained by any one before the end [p. 58] of the second century, or the beginning of the third. Irenæus, between the middle and the end of the *second* century, wrote a large work against heresy, in which he has quoted St. John's First Epistle, affirming distinctly that the Antichrists which John opposed, and against whom all his expressions of hostility were directed, were the *Gnostic Christians*. This will appear from a passage in Irenæus, which will be shortly quoted with advantage.

It is Tertullian who first states that John opposed two classes of what he esteemed to be heresy, the Gnostic, and that of Ebion,* or the proper Unitarian. He says that when John alluded to those who denied that Christ had *come in the flesh*, he meant the Gnostics; but that he meant the doctrine of Ebion, when speaking of those persons who thought that Jesus *was not the Son of God*.†

In answer to this view, I ought strictly to confine my remarks to John's allusions to a disbelief in the Son of God, passing by the other controversial expressions as on all hands admitted to have been directed, not against Unitarians, but against the Gnostics.

But I must deviate from this course, and consider *both* cases, for a particular reason. Dr. Horsley, in his controversy with

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vulsio ejus, quæ falsò cognominatur scientia, ut confunderet eos et suaderet eos, quoniam unus Deus qui omnia fecit per verbum suum, et non quemadmodum illi dicunt, alterum quidem Fabricatorem, alium autem Patrem Domini, etc. Omnia igitur talia circumscribere volens discipulus Domini, et regulam veritatis constituere in ecclesia, quia est unus Deus omnipotens, qui per verbum suum omnia fecit, et visibilia et invisibilia: significans quoque quoniam per verbum per quod Deus perfecit conditionem in hoc et salutem his qui in conditione sunt præstitit hominibus: sic inchoavit in ea quæ est secundum evangelium doctrina. In principio erat verbum, etc. Adv. Haer. Lib. III. cap. 11.

* For an explanation concerning Ebion, see page 83.

† At in epistola eos maxime antichristos vocat, qui Christum negarent in carne venisse, et qui non putarent Jesum esse filium Dei. Illud Marcion, hoc Hebion vindicavit. — Hæc sunt, ut arbitror, genera doctrinarum adulterinarum, quæ sub apostolis fuisse ab ipsis apostolis discimus. De Præ. Hær. Sect. 33, 34.

Dr. Priestley, admitting that the expressions about Christ's having *come in the flesh* referred solely to the Gnostics,* nevertheless affirmed that they implied on the part of the writer a belief in the pre-existing divinity of Christ, and a censure on Unitarianism.† 1 John iv. 1, 2, 3: "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God. Every spirit that *confesseth* that Jesus Christ *is come in the flesh*, is of God. And every spirit that *confesseth not* that Jesus Christ *is come in the flesh*, is not of God; and this is that spirit of Antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world." Dr. Horsley thinks that the remarks which occur in these verses concerning Christ's having come in the flesh implied the notion of a pre-existent state, from which Christ *might* have *come* in some other way than in the flesh, but from which he *actually came* in the flesh. Otherwise Dr. Horsley believes that John's phraseology was nugatory.‡ For he argues that no respectable writer, speaking of any one who, as a mere man, did not possess the power of coming otherwise than in the flesh, would have said of this person that he had actually come in the flesh, such an expression [p. 59] being altogether unnecessary concerning a human being, who had not the choice of two different ways of coming. Now, I grant that no respectable writer, that no writer having common sense, would, *in ordinary circumstances*, have said of any man concerning whom he wrote, that he had come in the flesh, or (which is the same thing) that he was truly a human being. But there is a chance of *peculiar circumstances* in which this might have been said, not only without censure, but with approval. If it were affirmed by a numerous body of persons, and in the most open and persevering manner, that the object of a writer's memorial, being a man, had *not* come in the flesh, or was *not* truly a human being, what should the writer in vindication say concerning him of whom he wrote, but that he *was actually* a man, that he *did actually* come in the flesh? But this is precisely the object of John's remarks. The Gnostic Christians denied that Christ had come in the flesh; John censures this erroneous opinion, and in opposition

* Dr. Horsley's Tracts, p. 120. † Ibid., pp. 120, 121.
‡ Ibid., p. 123.

to it recommends the truth that Jesus Christ was properly a man. Dr. Horsley knew this, and confessed this; yet affirmed nevertheless that John's expressions about Christ's *coming in the flesh* are not sufficiently accounted for, without involving the condemnation of Unitarianism.*

That my readers may know more satisfactorily the weakness of Dr. Horsley's view, I will lay down a few hints on the opinion of the Gnostics concerning Christ.† I have already mentioned (at page 61) that the basis of the Gnostic philosophy was a belief that all *matter* was *essentially evil*, and an annoyance to whatever was *spiritual;* but that God was a being entirely *free from evil.* And as a consequence of this, I mentioned (at page 62) that the Gnostics thought that the world was not made by God himself, a perfectly benevolent Spirit, but by another and less perfect Creator. A second consequence will now be stated, bearing immediately on our present subject. The Gnostics expected that the all-benevolent God would send a Divine messenger, who should be a purely *spiritual* being, one of the Eons out of his πλήρωμα, or fulness, for the purpose of delivering mankind from their subjection to the evils that result from matter. When, therefore, some of them saw or heard of the miracles of our Saviour, and could not resist the conviction that he was ordained by God, performing wonders by God's power, they found themselves compelled, on confessing his claims as the expected means of their deliverance, either to renounce the opinion which led them to expect a purely *spiritual* Eon, or else to reconcile our Saviour's circumstances with their preconceived and still loved view. Accordingly they took the latter [p. 60] alternative. They invented the hypothesis, that Jesus of Nazareth, the person who taught, wrought miracles, lived a life of holiness and piety, suffered, died, and rose again, was not actually the *Christ*, but rather a shrine or receptacle, in which the *Christ*, a Divine Eon, who was entirely spiritual, dwelt for a certain portion of time. Some of them said that Jesus of Nazareth, the shrine in which the Christ dwelt, was a human being; these were they who, whatever was their name

* Dr. Horsley's Tracts, pp. 120, 121.

† Drawn up after a comparison of what has been written on this subject by Mosheim, Lardner, Michaelis, Priestley, and Horsley himself: and, among the ancients, by Irenæus.

at first, were soon called Cerinthians, after their principal guide, Cerinthus. Others said that Jesus of Nazareth, the mask under which the Christ dwelt, was a phantom, or human being in appearance; these were the Docetes. But both equally denied that the *Christ*, or Divine Eon, had come in the flesh. Both maintained that the *Christ* was an *invisible spiritual* being, while that which was visible, whether a man or a phantom, was only Jesus of Nazareth. Against both parties, most probably, St. John wrote, declaring that Christ had actually come in the flesh, was actually a man, and not a spiritual Eon, which merely dwelt for a short time, whether in connection with a man or with a phantom.

Let us now review St. John's commendations of a belief in "the Son of God," commendations which were called forth, as I think, like his other remarks which we have considered, in consequence of the heresy of the Gnostics. 1 John iv. 15: "Whosoever shall confess that *Jesus is the Son of God*, God dwelleth in him, and he in God." Ch. v. 5: "Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that *Jesus is the Son of God?*" Ver. 10: "He that believeth on the *Son of God* hath the witness in himself; he that believeth not God, hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his *Son*." Ver. 12: "He that *hath the Son* hath life; and he that *hath not the Son of God* hath not life." Both the Cerinthians and the Docetes affirmed that Jesus of Nazareth was a mere receptacle in which the Christ dwelt, as I have said, and not the Christ himself, who was a spiritual being. Now it was to the Christ, thus distinguished from Jesus, that these Gnostics attached all their ideas of glory, including the title of *Son of God*. It followed, therefore, that they must deny that Jesus, the mere receptacle of the Christ, was the Son of God, confining that name to the Divine Eon. And this denial they certainly made. They said that the *Christ* was the Son of God, but that *Jesus* was not; thus provoking the rebuke of the Apostle John, as against persons who were in reality disbelieving the *Son of God*.*

This view is proved by John's Epistle itself, and ecclesiastical history bears it out. That it was those who separated the Christ from Jesus who also denied the Son of God, accord-

* See Michaelis, Introd., Vol. IV. pp. 409, 410.

ing to John, is proved by two [p. 61] verses in his Epistle, chap. v. ver. 1: "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the *Christ* is born of God." Ver. 5: "Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the *Son of God?*" It is evident from these two verses, that a belief that Jesus of Nazareth was the *Christ*, and not a different person, was thought by John to be synonymous with the belief that Jesus was the *Son of God*, and not a different person. This view is also suggested by chap. ii. ver. 22: "Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the *Christ?* He is Antichrist that denieth the Father and the *Son*."

I shall now quote from Irenæus the passage which I before promised, to prove that in his opinion those persons who denied that Jesus was the Christ were the same with those who denied that he was the Son of God, being the Gnostics, who separated the Christ, the Son of God, from Jesus; and also to prove that those who denied Jesus to be the Christ, and to be the Son of God, were the same with those who disbelieved that the Christ, the Son of God, had come in the flesh, being the same Gnostics who separated their Eon Christ, the Son of God, from Jesus of Nazareth. Irenæus thus writes: "The Gospel acknowledges no other Son of Man, except him who was born of Mary, and who suffered. It knows nothing of the '*Christ*' flying from Jesus previous to his passion. It knows only him who was born, viz. *Jesus*, the *Christ*, the *Son of God*, who, still the same person, suffered and rose again from the dead; as John the disciple of the Lord confirms, saying, 'But these are written, that ye might believe that *Jesus* is the *Christ*, the *Son of God;* and that, believing, ye might have life through his name';* guarding against those blasphemous doctrines which DIVIDE the Lord as much as possible, affirming him to consist of this substance and of the other. On which account, also, he (John) hath testified in his Epistle: 'Little children, it is the last time; and as ye have heard that Antichrist shall come, even now are there many Antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time. They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us; but they went out that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.'† 'Who is a liar but he that denieth that

* John xx. 31. † 1 John ii. 18, 19.

Jesus is the *Christ?'** This is Antichrist. — That *homicidal* opinion of theirs, which diminishes and DIVIDES into pieces the Son of God, was what the Lord forewarned us to beware of, and what his Apostle John, in his Epistle, enjoins us to shun, saying, 'For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is *come in the flesh.* This is a deceiver and an Antichrist. Look to yourselves that (ye) lose not those things which (ye) have wrought.'† And again, in his Epistle, he says: 'Many false prophets are gone out into the [p. 62] world. Hereby know ye the spirit of God; every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is *come in the flesh*, is of God';‡ and every spirit that DIVIDES Jesus Christ is not of God, but of Antichrist. On which account he again says in his Epistle: 'Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the *Christ*, is born of God,'§ well knowing that *Jesus* the *Christ* is ONE and the SAME, to whom the gates of heaven were opened; — who shall also in the very same flesh in which he suffered come again, revealing the glory of his Father."‖

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* 1 John ii. 22. † 2 John 7, 8.

‡ 1 John iv. 1, 2. § 1 John v. 1.

‖ Non ergo alterum filium hominis novit evangelium, nisi hunc qui ex Maria, qui et passus est. Sed neque Christum avolantem ante passionem ab Jesu, sed hunc qui natus est Jesum Christum novit Dei Filium, et eundem hunc passum resurrexisse, quemadmodum Joannes Domini discipulus confirmat dicens: Hæc autem scripta sunt ut credatis, quoniam Jesus est Christus Filius Dei, et ut credentes vitam æternam habeatis in nomine ejus: providens has blasphemas regulas quæ dividunt Dominum quantum ex ipsis attinet, ex altera et altera substantia dicentes eum factum. Propter quod et in epistola sua sic testificatus est nobis: Filioli, novissima hora est, et quemadmodum audistis, quoniam Antichristus venit, nunc Antichristi multi facti sunt, unde cognoscimus quoniam novissima hora est. Ex nobis exierunt, sed non erant ex nobis; si enim fuissent ex nobis, permansissent utique nobiscum; sed ut manifestarentur quoniam non sunt ex nobis. Cognoscite ergo quoniam omne mendacium extraneum est, et non est de veritate. Quis est mendax, nisi qui negat, quoniam Jesus non est Christus. Hic est Antichristus, etc., etc. Sententia enim eorum homicidialis Deos quidem plures confingens, et Patres multos simulans, comminuens autem et per multa dividens Filium Dei; quos et Dominus nobis cavere prædixit, et discipulus ejus Joannes in prædicta epistola fugere eos præcepit, dicens: Multi seductores exierunt in hunc mundum, qui non confitentur Jesum Christum in carne venisse. Hic est seductor et Antichristus. Videte eos, ne perdatis quod operati estis. Et rursus in epistola ait: Multi pseudo-prophetæ exierunt de seculo; in hoc cognoscite spiritum Dei. Omnis spiritus qui confitetur Jesum Christum in carne venisse ex Deo est. Et omnis spi-

Only one other subject connected with John's writings remains to be considered. My readers may inquire, why do I not recollect the important verse in John's First Epistle, "For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one" (1 John v. 7)? Is not this, it may be asked, a clear and undeniable proof of the Trinity? Perhaps it was on account of this verse, containing so expressive a declaration of the Trinity, that the orthodox Fathers held John in esteem above the other sacred writers, in whose works [p. 63] no similar verse, or one approaching to it, is to be found. No, my readers. You must learn that this verse was *not* written by St. John. None of the Fathers of the first four centuries could have thought of John in connection with it, as worthy of praise or not, *for they never saw the verse.* It is a forgery of the latter end of the fifth century, and probably not for many centuries afterwards did it, as an interpolation, make its way among the manuscripts of the Latin version. It is not to be found *now* in any Latin manuscript earlier than the *ninth* century, nor in any Greek manuscript earlier than the *fifteenth* century. It has been rejected as spurious by many of the most learned divines of Europe, Trinitarian, Arian, and Unitarian. See the evidence against its genuineness in the accompanying map.

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ritus qui solvit Jesum Christum, non est ex Deo, sed ex Antichristo est. Hæc autem similia sunt illi quod in Evangelio dictum est, quoniam verbum caro factum est, et habitavit in nobis. Propter quod rursus in epistola clamat: Omnis qui credit, quia Jesus est Christus, ex Deo natus est, unum et eundem sciens Jesum Christum, cui apertæ sunt portæ cœli, propter carnalem ejus assumptionem; qui etiam in eadem carne, in qua passus est, venit, gloriam revelans Patris. Adv. Hær. Lib. iii. c. 18.

STATEMENT O

AGAINST THE GENUINENESS OF 1 JOHN v. 7, WI

The spurious words are here printed

Ver. 7. — For there are three that bear record [*in heaven, the Father, the W*
bear witness in earth,] the spirit, and the water, and the blood; and these three

The only genuine words of St. John in this passage are as follows: — "Fo
these three agree in one," that is, they agree in their testimony concerning C

The evidence to prove that the text included within brackets is spurious, is a
follows: —

I. This text is not to be found in any Greek MS.* earlier than the fifteenth cen
tury,† or, as some rather think, in any Greek MS. earlier than the sixteenth
century.‡ The Greek MSS.§ containing St. John's First Epistle, and omitting thi
text, amounted to ONE HUNDRED AND TWELVE when Mr. Porson wrote against
Archdeacon Travis.‖ Several other MSS. have since been discovered, all of them
agreeing in the same omission. The only Greek MSS. which the advocates fo
this text have urged in its defence are three; two of which have been proved
to be of the fifteenth century if not rather of the sixteenth, and the third to be o
the seventeenth century.

II. The text is not to be found in any Latin MS. earlier than the ninth century.
It is also omitted in many of the later Latin MSS.¶ In those MSS. in which i
occurs there are many variations of this verse; there are frequent additions, omis
sions, and alterations of particular words; in some cases the verse precedes th
present 8th verse, and in other cases it follows it; sometimes it is not written in
the text, but in the margin; sometimes by the same hand that transcribed th
whole manuscript; sometimes by a later hand; sometimes it occurs after an
erasure.** All this gives rise to the suspicion of forgery. In three MSS. which
Bishop Burnet saw,†† the disputed text, coming after the present 8th, was joined
by the phrase '*just as*' (*sicut*), leading us to think that it was at first a margina
commentary and then a textual addition, after the following way: *For there ar
three that bear witness* (*in earth*), *&c.*, JUST AS *there are three that bear record i
heaven,*" &c.‡‡

III. This text did not occur in any of the other ancient versions besides th
Latin. It is not found in the MSS. (1.) of the old Syriac, (2.) of the later Syriac by
Philoxenus, (3.) of the later Syriac revised by Thomas Heracleensis; nor (4.) in th
Coptic version; nor (5, 6.) in either of the Arabic versions; nor (7.) in the Ethiopi
version; nor (8.) in the Slavonic; nor (9.) in the Armenian; nor (10.) in the Sa
hidic version.§§

IV. This text was never quoted by any of the Greek Fathers,‖‖ whether the
entertained low or high opinions concerning the Trinity. Various other passage
of Scripture were frequently quoted to prove the existence of three persons in on
God; but this verse was never once alluded to, although it is the only text i
Scripture that is actually to the point in support of the Trinity, and is the com
monplace proof of modern Trinitarian systems.

V. This text was not quoted by any Latin authority before the end of the fift

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* Manuscript.
† Belsham's Inquiry, p. 236.
‡ Professor Porson's Letters to Archdeacon Travis, pp. 117, 126. Bengel, a candid advo
cate for this verse, was of this opinion. See Michaelis's Introd., Vol. IV. p. 417.
§ Manuscripts.
‖ Letters, p. 131.
¶ Belsham, p. 236.
** Porson, pp. 142, 143
†† Ibid., p. 148.
‡‡ Ibid., pp. 400, 401.
§§ See Michaelis, Vol. IV. p. 418. Porson, pp. 157 – 208. Belsham, p. 237.
‖‖ Michaelis, Vol. IV. p. 418.

alics and included within brackets.

and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. *Ver.* 8. *And there are three that* e in one.

re are three that bear record, the spirit, and the water, and the blood; and

ntury, when it is supposed to have been inserted into the margins of a very few tin MSS.* But it was still so little known, even in the eighth century, that Bede, o then flourished, and who has commented on the whole of the fifth chapter of hn's First Epistle, does not mention the verse, although he was a critic, and must ve been acquainted with MSS.† Between the time of Bede's death and the ith century, an impostor, under shelter of the name of Jerome, wrote a Prologue Jerome's Latin translation of the Catholic Epistles, in which he declared his asons for believing the genuineness of the text, maintaining that it had been kept t of the Latin MSS. by translators,‡ but that he thought it to be his duty to re- re it to its proper place. On the faith of this Prologue, which was believed in an norant age, by the members of the Roman Church, to have been the work of rome, (though it has been proved to be a forgery of the ninth century,§) the verse s thought to be genuine. This was the reason why, after the ninth century, e text was added in so many MSS. of the Latin version used by the Roman urch, while it was wanting in the Greek MSS., and in the MSS. of all the other versions besides the Latin.

Some of the Latin fathers who did not quote the 7th verse of 1 John v. ALLEGORIZED the 8th verse, IN PROOF OF THE TRINITY. I conclude from this, not only at they were ignorant of the 7th verse, but also that this allegorical use of the ree (earthly) witnesses in the 8th verse was what gave rise to the introduction of e other three.‖

VI. In consequence of the preceding evidence against the genuineness of this text, was omitted in some of the best of the printed editions of the Greek Testament; z. (1, 2.) in the first two editions of Erasmus, in 1516 and 1518–19; (3.) in the tion of Aldus, in 1518; (4.) in the edition of Strasburg, in 1524; (5.) in the edi- n of Colinæus, at Paris, in 1534; (6.) in the edition of Haguenau, in 1581; (7.) in edition of Harwood; (8.) of Matthæi; and (9.) of Griesbach.† It was marked doubtful in the edition of Zuinglius and Bullinger, and in the editions of Bowyer d Knapp. Westein marked it as undoubtedly spurious, but it was his object to blish the Received Text unaltered.¶

VII. The text was also omitted in Luther's printed translation of the New Tesnent. Luther translated the Greek Testament into German, and not only omitted verse in his first edition, but refused to receive it into any subsequent edition.** the old English Bibles of Henry the Eighth and of Edward the Sixth, the text s printed in small types, or included within brackets. The same was the case h Queen Elizabeth's Bible of 1566. It was between the years 1566 and 1580 t the words of the text began to be printed as they now are; but it is unknown whose authority this change was made. ††

VIII. The verse is altogether unnecessary in the place where it now stands; and s even an obstruction to the argument of the whole context, as will appear to one upon inspection.

Porson, pp. 400, 401. † Ibid., p. 382. ‡ Ibid., p. 298.
Ibid., pp. 291–306. ‖ Michaelis, Vol. IV. pp. 434, 435. ¶ Belsham, p. 240.
* See Michaelis, Vol. IV. p. 439. †† Belsham, *p.* 241.

CHAPTER V.

OF THE REAL SOURCES OF TRINITARIANISM, AND IN PARTICULAR THE INFLUENCE OF THE GREEK PHILOSOPHY ON THE MINDS OF SPECULATING CHRISTIAN WRITERS.

I HAVE little doubt that a *vague, unguarded, undiscriminating* veneration for Jesus Christ was one cause which contributed to his *deification* (an important step in the construction of Trinitarianism). How many men in ancient times, who did service to their contemporaries, and were eminently raised by their virtues, talents, or even successes, above others, were elevated by their *unthinking admirers* to the dignity of gods? Was not this the origin of the Greek Mythology? It is not, then, to be wondered at, that Jesus of Nazareth, who spake as "never man spake," who did miracles such as no other person was enabled by God to perform, and whose life, death, resurrection, and ascension were one grand chain of marvels, should be thought by his followers, in an age, and in ages, subsequent to his disappearance from earth, to have been *much more than a son of man*, when it was forgotten, or but slightly called to mind, who it was by whose power Jesus Christ was capacitated to be what he was.

I say that I consider a vague and undiscriminating admiration of Jesus Christ to have been one cause of the notion of his deity; a notion which interferes with the prerogative of the Almighty Father, and destroys the justness of our conceptions of Him. But whose fault was this? Was the doctrine of the deity of Christ a *fair* inference from his miracles and virtues? Not at all. Because the sun gives light and heat, fructifies the seed of the earth, causes the bud of spring, the flower of summer, and the fruits of autumn to appear, and confers happiness on the human race, it is [p. 64] not surely right to infer, although the inference has been drawn by millions, that the sun is a god, or *the* God of the universe. Ought the sun, then, to have been removed from his place to have prevented

the Persian from building temples to his honor? If not, we cannot blame the miracles of Christ, or regret their performance, although the multitude of his professed followers have, from an early period, thoughtlessly enough, made this one ground for exalting him into comparison, more or less, with that Supreme Being, by whose power, employed through Jesus Christ, the miracles were really done.* Men must reflect, and retract their wrong opinion, loosely formed. And no doubt, after it shall have been withdrawn, Christians will not again fall back on such an error; being taught by past experience to discriminate wisely. Correct opinions and conduct in individuals in all the walks of ordinary life, are the results of time and of experience, often after many errors. Even so is it with the most important views and feelings of the *masses* of men. But truth will, in the course of time, prevail, and reap all the security of a *final* triumph.

Along with a *vague* admiration of Christ's power and merit, some portion of *false shame*, on being reviled by their enemies as the disciples of a *crucified man*, must have had an influence on many of the early Christians, to induce them to form an opinion of their master having pre-existed as a Divine Intelligence. We know that to the Jews Christ crucified was "a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness." Therefore, a desire on the part of those who professed his name to exalt him above the reproach of crucifixion might instigate them to *fancy*, and then to *assert*, him to have been a divine being or person, whose *human nature only* suffered.

Nor were there wanting some things in Scripture to countenance this view of a pre-existing divinity in Christ; the minds of interpreters being first *prepared* for such speculation. For Scripture has been construed to suit the thoughts of many inventors in different ages. For example, when our Lord says that he "came down from heaven" (John vi. 38) to promote the service of God, nothing more was meant, most likely, than that he came forth from the retirement in which he had held communion with heaven on the nature of his mission, its method of execution, and its future expected results. This receives explanation from Paul's remark, where he

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* *Jesus of Nazareth, a* MAN *approved of God among you by miracles, and wonders, and signs, which* GOD *did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know.* Acts ii. 22.

speaks of our conversation (that is, the life and conduct of Christians) as being *in heaven* (Philip. iii. 20); not intimating the paradox of a personal presence in the celestial world on the part of Christians who were yet upon earth, but of a life in conformity to, and in communion with, the [p. 65] mind of God. Yet this expression of Christ, that he came down from heaven, might easily convey the idea of *pre-existence* and *divinity* to wonder-loving and credulous minds; to men forgetful that Christ was a Jew, the descendant of David, and that he had throughout his life shown all the properties of a human being, and nothing more, except what was *given* to him by God for certain ends.

In like manner, there were expressions of Christ concerning the close relation in which he stood to God, as a son to a father, which were also liable to misconception: "No man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." (Matt. xi. 27.)* But what if such a passage as this has been construed to favor the notion that Christ, before he was born among men, had a divine nature, *in* which, and *in consequence of* which, he held a very intimate co-existence and communion with the Supreme Being? Have not other passages been thought to countenance the doctrines of Transubstantiation; of Penance and the remission of sins by ecclesiastics; of Roman infallibility; and of *persecution?* Take, for instance, the words of our Saviour, "THIS is my body," and "THIS is my blood." (Matt. xxvi. 26, 28; Mark xiv. 22, 24.) If we interpret Christ's language *literally*, without thinking on the nature of the case, we are forced to believe that a piece of bread was the Lord's actual body, and that a portion of wine was his actual blood; to such extravagancy are we driven, if we do not exercise our reason sufficiently, and with care. It is only by a *deliberate reflection* on the words of Christ and of his Apostles that we can gain an accu-

* Which may be thus explained: No man knew the purpose for which Christ was sent abroad among men, and the purity of his intentions and conduct, so thoroughly as He who sent him, even the Eternal Father; and no man was so acquainted with the character and plans of the Eternal Father as Jesus Christ, who was elected to be his Son, inspired with more than ordinary wisdom, and qualified, above any preceding prophet, to understand and to teach the knowledge of the Deity to mankind.

rate Christian knowledge. And if such attention to the fair sense of the words of Christ and his Apostles was *not* made a particular point by imaginative professors of the Gospel in early ages, we need not be surprised that they went on to conceive of their Master as of a God, in accordance with a vague admiration of him, and a desire to escape from the obloquy of the cross.

But what contributed more than all to the formation of Trinitarianism was the influence of the *Greek philosophy;* not meaning by that the religious and moral doctrine of Anaxagoras and of Socrates, but such chimerical fancies as were but too familiar to many Greeks, at and after the time of Christ. In other words, I refer to the influence of that philosophy which has been called the *Platonic*, because its cultivators pretended [p. 66] to borrow their notions principally, among other writers, from Plato; but which ought more properly to be styled the *Pseudo-Platonic*,* because it arose from a misconception on many points, rather than a strict interpretation, of Plato's language. Now I contend, that speculating Christians, from Justin Martyr and Clement of Alexandria down to Austin and Chrysostom, who had learned (some of them previous to conversion) this *Pseudo-Platonic* philosophy from the Greek schools, *were they who brought the several parts of Trinitarianism by degrees forward*, by means of their writings, dogmatical and controversial, including their commentaries on Scripture, their works drawn up against heretics, and their defences of the Christian religion as they understood it.

We have already (Chap. IV.) seen something of the pernicious nature of the *Gnostic* philosophy, which, even in the time of the Apostles, was operating to the disadvantage of Christianity. But we are now to take a view of the influence of *another*, viz. the *Pseudo-Platonic*, which actually *succeeded* in marring the doctrine of the Gospel in its acceptation by the Church. The points in this philosophy which assisted in the formation of Trinitarianism may be stated under the three following heads: First, the doctrine of the *pre-existence* of souls, in its application to Jesus Christ. Second, the doctrine of a *Second* Divine Principle, called the *Mind* or *Reason* of God, different from the Supreme Deity. And third, the doc-

* Platonic in pretence.

trine concerning the *Soul* of the world, as a *Third* Divine Principle.

1. Plato himself had taught the opinion of the *pre-existence* of all souls.* He maintained that the souls of men had been originally intended for celestial residences which God had assigned for them; but that (for some cause or other) they were *sent down* into human bodies as into a sepulchre or prison.† Plato was so strongly impressed with this opinion, that he made use of it as one of his arguments for a future life; thinking that from the *pre-existence* there was a strong probability in favor of the *future existence* of souls.

Now this notion of the pre-existence of souls was, from Plato, communicated to his followers, some of whom held it so late as the third and fourth centuries after Christ, as Plotinus and Jamblichus among heathens, ‡ and Origen and Lactantius among philosophizing Christians.§ And if others of the latter class did not *defend* it as a truth, *all* were certainly *familiar* with it as a part of Platonism and of their Platonic education.

What, then, I ask, was more likely than that this notion (of the pre-existence of the intelligent part of man), since it was well known to [p. 67] philosophizing Christians, should have been applied by them to the case of so extraordinary a person as Jesus Christ, those who believed with Plato, or who had even only *learned* of him, inquiring whether anything in Christ had pre-existed in a higher state than his humble earthly condition? and how? that they might account for the Saviour's miracles and purity of life, even though they should not again make use of the notion of the pre-existence of souls in reference to any *common* case. It is certain that Christ's pre-existence was a thought which came *readily enough* to the minds of philosophizing Christians in the second and third centuries, *after it had been altogether unknown in the apostolic age;* that is, as I should say, it came with sufficient ease to men acquainted with the Platonic idea of the pre-existence of souls, after a profound ignorance on the subject by those who were plain and unlearned followers of Jesus of Nazareth.

2. Plato, who had taught the doctrine of One Great First Cause, who is above all things, and the Maker of the Uni-

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* Dr. Enfield's Hist. of Philosophy (on the basis of Brucker's Hist. Crit. Philosophiæ), Vol. I. p. 239, ed. 1819.

† Ibid. ‡ Ibid., Vol. II. pp. 63, 91. § Ibid., pp. 280, 283.

verse, believed that His method of creation was conducted according to certain patterns, images, or ideas, existing from eternity in His own mind.* The philosopher has occasion in his writings to speak *very often* of these patterns or ideas, and of the Divine Mind in which they eternally existed; these subjects, indeed, forming an important part of his metaphysical system. But the consequence of this frequent reference, and in an obscure manner, to the Divine Mind, was the inference, on the part of many of Plato's followers, that their master taught the doctrine of a *Second Divine Principle*, called the *Mind* of God, or the *Reason* of God, distinct from God himself, who was the First Great Cause.†

Plato himself probably had no notion that this conclusion would be drawn; nor has it, indeed, been inferred by his most respectable admirers, as Cicero, who was well qualified to judge on this subject, and Apuleius and Alcinous, who wrote commentaries on Plato in the second and third centuries after Christ.‡ But it was enough that the inference was a *likely* one, (owing to Plato's repetitions and obscurity of language,) to justify many of his imaginative and fanciful disciples in drawing it; among whom were some who became converts to Christianity, still retaining an esteem and affection for Plato, their first instructor.

Concerning these last, I would ask, Is it not likely that, seeking to reconcile the doctrine (as they understood it) of Plato, their first master, with that of Christ, their new one, they would endeavor to find, if possible, the Second Divine Principle of their Platonic system in the New [p. 68] Testament? It is known from their own testimony that they *did thus act;* and it is also known, that they satisfied themselves that they had found their Second Principle in the "word" of God described by St. John in his Introduction to his Gospel. For one of the terms which Plato uses in speaking of the *Mind* of God is LOGOS; and the same term, LOGOS, is what John employed in his Introduction to denote the *word* of God; from which coincidence the philosophizing Christians, rather than

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* Enfield, Vol. I. pp 233, 234. Priestley's Early Opinions, Vol. I. p. 321.

† Enfield, Vol. II. pp 88, 89.

‡ I understand this from what Dr Enfield says in Vol. I. pp 229, 230. See also, for Plato's opinions, Priestley, Hist. of Op., Vol. I pp. 320 - 340.

renounce their philosophy, inferred from John, as they had before done from Plato, (and without sufficient reason from either,) the doctrine of a Second Divine Principle or Person.

3. Plato had held the notion that the world, after it was formed by God out of primeval matter, received from its Architect a *Soul*, which was compounded of God's own substance and of matter; meaning, consequently, a *created Soul*.*

But Plato, in some parts of his works, when speaking of the world as animated by *Soul*, employs language of a higher and more dignified nature † than was suited to a principle composed of spirit and of *matter*. Some of his disciples, therefore, concluded that he entertained the notion of *two* Souls, the one of which was *Mundane*, ‡ that is, inhabiting the world, (which was in reality Plato's idea,) and the other *Super-mundane*, being entirely of spiritual origin, and the *Third Principle* in the Deity § (which was the addition of Plato's followers).

Whether it was with a notion in their minds of the *Mundane* Soul, or of the *Super-mundane* of Platonism, that philosophizing Christians came to the study of the Scriptures, it would be difficult to say; but I rather think that it was with the latter notion, in the case of most of them. It is certain that they interpreted the texts of Scripture, which introduce the Spirit of God, the Spirit, the Holy Spirit, to accord with the idea which they had formed as Platonists concerning some *Third Principle*, called the Soul or Spirit of the world.

In order to form an adequate conception of the force of a chimerical interpretation of Plato, in giving birth to Trinitarianism, we ought to take some notice of the doctrine of the Trinity, as it was taught in one of the *heathen* schools of Alexandria in the third and fourth centuries. Not that this school was ignorant of the doctrine of the Christians; ‖ for it professed to borrow from all systems whatever was good in each, and on this account has been called the Eclectic, or *selecting* school of philosophy.¶ But its principal object of admiration was Plato; its members called themselves followers of that master, from whose writings chiefly they undertook to prove their system.** The founder of this school, at [p. 69] the

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* Enfield, Vol. I. p. 236.
† Dr. Cudworth's Intellectual System of the Universe, pp. 576, 579.
‡ Ibid., pp. 576 and 562. § Ibid. ‖ Enfield, Vol. II. p. 56.
¶ Ibid, p 55. ** Ibid. See Vol. II. Book III. Ch. iv. Sect. 4.

beginning of the third century, was Ammonius Saccas; and some of the writings of four of its most eminent doctors, viz. Plotinus, Porphyry, Jamblichus, and Proclus, still exist.* From the works of the first and last of these four, Dr. Cudworth, in his Intellectual System, has taken many quotations to exhibit their views of their own Trinity, at great length. By a reference to those quotations it will be learned how boldly and unreservedly the doctrine of a Divine Trinity, founded on a loose interpretation of Plato, was taught in a school at Alexandria *not professing faith in the Christian religion.*

The Trinity of the Eclectic school may be thus described. It consisted of (1.) TO EN (τὸ ἕν), the ONE Being, who was self-existent, and the source of all other existence. This self-existent Principle was otherwise called TO AGATHON, the Supreme Good. (2.) NOUS or LOGOS, the Mind or Reason of God, proceeding from the former Principle, which was above all. And (3.) PSYCHE, or the Soul of the world, inferior to both the last.† Among these three Principles there was a gradual subordination of the Second to the First, and of the Third to both the First and the Second. Still they all, according to Dr. Cudworth, existed from eternity, as the only uncreated objects;‡ were of the same divine substance or nature;§ and were equally indestructible.‖ They were sometimes called three Divine Hypostases, sometimes three Natures, three Principles, Causes, Opificers, and even three Gods. Yet, taken together, they constituted One Divinity.¶

Is it asked, what was the reason why the members of the Eclectic school (and others before them) so interpreted Plato as to think him one of the fathers of such a system as Trinitarianism? or, in short, why they themselves were so fond of that system? I answer, that they very probably thought that the vast distance between the nature of the Supreme Deity and that of matter must be occupied by something *intermediate*, acting as a link or links between the First Cause on the one hand, and what was material on the other. Accordingly, be-

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* Enfield, Vol. II. Book III. Ch. iv. Sect. 4.

† Cudworth, pp. 546, 573, 578, 580, &c. Enfield, Vol. II. pp. 88, 89. Jortin's Rem. Ecc. Hist., Vol. I. p. 385.

‡ Cudworth, pp. 572 – 577.

§ Ibid., p. 596.

‖ Ibid., p. 577.

¶ Ibid., p. 588.

ginning with matter, and ascending upwards, they would think that *Soul*, or that which merely animates, was next above matter; above this, *Mind* or *Intelligence*, being that which perceives and directs; and above all, the First Great Agent, who existed of himself, and was the fountain of all other existence; who was altogether and supremely good, being removed farthest from matter, which contained elements of evil. Arguing in this manner, and filling their heads with notions of *Soul*, and of *Mind* or *Intellect* above *Soul*, and of *Self-existence* and *Goodness* above all, they became supporters at length of a [p. 70] Trinity of Divine substances, causes, or principles in the Godhead, interpreting their admired Plato to this effect. Nor will Dr. Cudworth say that this Trinity was much inferior to that of the Christian doctors who lived earlier than the fourth century; for he appears to be one of those students of history (alluded to at pages 28, 29) who were aware of the existence of a *subordination* in the Christian Trinity *prior to that time.* Dr. Cudworth admits that one might consider the advocates for the Eclectic Trinity "the more excusable, because the generality of Christian doctors, for the first three hundred years after the Apostles' times, plainly asserted the same (gradual subordination); as Justin Martyr, Athenagoras, Tatianus, Irenæus, the author of the Recognitions, Tertullian, Clemens Alexandrinus, Origen, Gregory Thaumaturgus, Dionysius of Alexandria, Lactantius, and many others." *

Perhaps I shall now be anticipated when I say, that the fact of the existence of *Pseudo-Platonic Trinitarianism*, as taught in the Eclectic school of Alexandria, nay, that the fact of the existence of this sort of Trinitarianism before the foundation of that school, and of its having been entertained by many who subsequently became converts to Christianity, *is a subject well known to many modern Trinitarians.* In consequence of this, a method has been proposed by them for preventing this whole matter from leaving an impression unfavorable to the Christian Trinity.

Nor altogether for this purpose, in a polemical point of view, but also for the sake of real satisfaction. I refer in particular to what has been said on this subject by Dr. Cudworth, already mentioned, the learned writer of "The True Intellectual System of the Universe," &c., and by Dr. Hors-

* Cudworth, p. 595.

ley, the champion for the Trinity on behalf of the Church of England.

Both of these admit the existence (in the third and fourth centuries) of the Eclectic doctrine of the Trinity; both of them *assert* that the doctrine of the Trinity was actually taught by Plato himself; both *allege* that it was known among heathens at even a much earlier period; that it was received by Parmenides, Pythagoras, Orpheus, and the priests of early Egypt; and that it formed part of the Persian and Chaldean theology. In short, they give to Trinitarianism a very high *heathen* origin, in order that they may at last bring in this conclusion, that it was a part of *ancient tradition*, first of all derived from God, and handed down through means of the patriarchal sages.*

Now this may appear a plausible notion to those who are already persuaded that the Trinity was taught by Christ and his Apostles; in that case, indeed, it forms a *probable* explanation. Otherwise, it does not; but, on the contrary, seems to be a lame, unwarranted deduction. For how many systems would some agreement of ancient tradition prove? Or rather, [p. 71] how many systems would some agreement of ancient tradition present to us, leaving us at a loss which to choose, — how to distinguish truth from error, — the right faith from the false? Indeed, let us but once trust to tradition, and we may, if we please, adore "gods many and lords many," in compliance with the voice of idolaters from a period earlier than the time of Abraham.

But I hesitate to believe the traditionary consent in favor of the Trinity, as it is represented by Dr. Cudworth and Bishop Horsley. I withhold my credence till a fuller exhibition of the subject than they have given.

The Pseudo-Platonic origin of the Trinity of the Christian creeds is aptly confirmed by a point in ecclesiastical history, which, on account of its great interest and value, I have purposely reserved for this place. I mean the fact, however it has been disputed by Trinitarian writers, and may at first sight startle those hitherto unacquainted with it, viz. *that the great body of the* JEWISH CHRISTIANS, *who separated from their Gentile brethren at a very early period, in order to gratify*

† Cudworth, pp. 547, 548. Horsley's Tracts, pp. 45 - 50.

A TABLE, RELATING TO THE A

TO ILLUSTRATE THE NARRATIVE AND

The Jewish Christians, when *separated* from their Gentile brethren, and uniting t
tical writers undd

EBION

Called by the Jee

These did not believe the

Neither Irenæus nor Tertullian informs us that any of these believed the mira
appear to have consisted of two sorts, some believing, and others disbelieving,
Hence, at a later period of their history, the Jewish Christians should be divided

I. CLASS OF

EBIONITES,

Called by the Jews Nazarenes.

They disbelieved the miraculous conception,* and the Deity of Christ.

From later ecclesiastical writers those who composed the first class appear
of the second class were allowed the name of Nazarenes, which both parties hi
consider the Jewish Christians under the two following heads, corresponding wi

EBIONITES,

Called by the Jews Nazarenes.

They disbelieved the miraculous conception,* and the Deity of Christ.

All these, then, disbelieved

* Those Ebionites who disbelieved the miraculous conception made use of copies
the events of the third. Whether they had *deprived* the Evangelist's original compo
added after Matthew's time, is a question which cannot at all be decided by any *ext*
conception having been a part of Matthew's original Gospel, seems to me to be st
mention the following: — 1. Jesus nowhere was called by his relatives or disciples, c
mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy *father*
son?" John i. 45, "Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found h
son of *Joseph*." vi. 42, "And they said, Is not this Jesus the son of *Joseph*, whose *fa*
to the faith of the Gospel, never, in their sermons, speeches, or epistles, made any
doctrine of any kind. Their silence, therefore, which was complete on this subject,
inutility for any good purpose. I have little doubt that the former supposition was t
two chapters of our present copy of Matthew's Gospel, connected with the birth ar
Symmachus, and others of the Ebionites, and it has always been maintained by t
quoted from Isaiah vii. 14, has no further signification in the original Hebrew of Isa
prophet, moreover, applied the prediction to an event which was to occur within
evil and choose the good, the land that thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of both
the mock-quotation (Matt. ii. 23), "that it might be fulfilled which was spoken, H
my son" (Matt. ii. 15). is not, as the Evangelist is made to allege, a *prediction*, in H
from Egypt: "When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out
under two years of age is not mentioned in any other history, though it is an occur
Roman Empire. It is almost incredible that such an event should have taken place

To face page 81.

Mosaic law with the profession of the Gospel, occur in the early ecclesias-
e name of

ES,
azarenes.
ty of Jesus Christ.

is conception;* but afterwards, according to Origen and Eusebius, they
iraculous conception, but without any knowledge of the Deity of Christ.
llows, into

II. CLASS OF
EBIONITES,
Called by the Jews Nazarenes.

They believed the miraculous conception, but not the Deity of Christ.

ve been forced to receive exclusively the name of Ebionites, while those
l along received from the Jews. Hence, at a still later period, we must
two above.

NAZARENES,
Formerly called Ebionites, and still by the Jews Nazarenes.

They believed the miraculous conception, but not the Deity of Christ.

Deity of Jesus Christ.

Matthew's Gospel not containing the first two chapters, but beginning with
of two chapters which he actually wrote, or whether two chapters have been
evidence. But the *internal* evidence against the account of the miraculous
ntly strong; and among other grounds on which my conviction rests, I will
his life and ministry, other than the son of *Joseph.* Luke ii. 48, "And his
I have sought thee sorrowing." iv. 22, "And they said, Is not this *Joseph's*
whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the
nd *mother* we know?" 2. Christ's Apostles, after they had converted many
of the supposed miraculous conception in way of *argument, illustration,* or
l either their *ignorance* of the supposed fact, or their conviction of its *utter*
th. 3. There are three *false quotations* from the Old Testament in the first
umstances of Christ therein described. (1.) It was remarked long ago by
rs, that the verse, "Behold, a *virgin* shall be with child," &c. (Matt. i. 23),
an "Behold, a *young woman* shall conceive, and bear a son," &c.; and the
y few years; "For," he says, "before the child shall know to refuse the
gs," ver. 16. (2.) There is no prophecy in the Old Testament answering to
be called a Nazarene." (3.) The statement, "Out of Egypt have I called
i. 1, but the recollection of a *past event*, viz. the deliverance of the Israelites
t." 4. Herod's alleged murder (ch. ii. 16) of all the children of Bethlehem
not merely of appalling cruelty, but utterly unparalleled in the annals of the
at being noticed by the Roman government.

their disposition to unite the ceremonies of the law with the profession of Christianity, NEVER BELIEVED IN THE DEITY OF CHRIST, *so far as their history is known; some of them thinking the Saviour to have been the son of Joseph and Mary, and others of Mary only by miraculous influence, but without any idea of his pre-existence.* This is a valuable point; it is important on two distinct accounts. On its being proved, it will show, in the first instance, the high antiquity of Unitarianism as the *only known* faith of the Hebrew converts to Christianity. And it will also impress upon us, in the second place, how a perfect separation from the Gentiles, and consequently from the influence of the Gentile philosophy, acted in one instance as a preservative against Trinitarian innovation; thus corroborating the view which I have been defending, that it was Pagan science (so called) which principally assisted towards the introduction of the Trinity among the (Gentile) churches.

We require to understand the *names* in ecclesiastical history under which the Jewish Christian separatists went, in order to perceive the force of the evidence for their total freedom from Trinitarianism, which I am about to produce. The Jewish Christians go under only *one* name in the works of the *earlier* writers, as Irenæus, Origen, and Eusebius. By these three men they are called Ebionites; and we may infer from Tertullian that this is the name which he also was disposed to give them. No other class of Jewish Christians are mentioned by these writers; and Origen (one of the three just mentioned) expressly includes in the term Ebionites *all* the Jewish Christians without exception.

In the *later* writers we find the Jewish Christians under *two* different names, Ebionites and Nazarenes. It is thus that they are brought before us by Epiphanius, Jerome, Austin, Theodoret, and many others. What [p. 72] was the reason of the first solitary appellation, and what also was the reason of the addition which was afterwards made, will appear gradually in the course of my remarks; and in the mean time the adjoining map will throw some light upon the subject.

Let me mention one circumstance before I proceed. We are to suppose the city of Jerusalem to have been already destroyed by Titus; the Jews and Christians driven from it by the Roman army; and those of the latter class, who were of Jewish extract, being the persons of whom I am to speak,

retired to Pella and other places on the east side of the river Jordan, as a refuge. It is *there*, that is, on the east side of Jordan, that those called Ebionites, and afterwards Ebionites and Nazarenes, (by ecclesiastical writers,) existed, who will be shown to have been the body of Jewish Christians, and disbelievers of the deity of Christ.

The Jewish Christian Separatists under the Name of EBIONITES.

There are intimations in the book of *Acts of the Apostles* that the question about the observance of the law of Moses was the cause of disturbance between the Jewish and Gentile converts at a very early period. All the Apostles, including Paul himself, respected to a certain extent the Mosaic rites, that they might not give offence to their Hebrew brethren who were attached to them.* At the same time, they decreed in favor of the Gentile Christians a full absolution from the same restraint; declaring that those who wished to turn the Gentiles to Judaic rites, under pretence of this change being necessary to salvation, were acting wrong, and hindering the influence of the Gospel.† During this period the Jewish Christians were distinguished from the Gentile believers by only such names as *they of the circumcision*, the *Hebrews*, and the *brethren in Judæa*.

But after the destruction of Jerusalem, when the Jewish Christians, adhering to the law of Moses, and as much as ever attached to it, retired beyond Jordan, they appear to have gradually fallen away from communication with the Gentile Christians, and to have received, when thus separated, a new and distinct name, viz. that of Ebionites. What was the origin of this name?

The unbelieving Jews were in the practice of calling all the believers in Christ *Nazarenes*,‡ and probably the Jewish part of them in particular, coming more often in contact with them. On the other hand, the Gentile converts did not *accept* this name, rather preferring to be called *Christians*, a title which they received first of all from the inhabitants of [p. 73] Anti-

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* Acts xxi. 20 – 26. Ver. 20. "Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; *and they are all zealous of the law*."

† See Acts of the Apostles, chap. xv.

‡ "A ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes." Acts xxiv. 5.

och,* and afterwards from all Greeks, Romans, and barbarians throughout the empire. In this case, one might suppose that the Gentile believers, holding by the name of *Christians*, might have conceded to the Jewish converts the other appellation of *Nazarenes*, to which they themselves (that is, the Jewish Christians) were not, probably, disinclined. But this act of favor was not granted, because the name of Nazarenes was most likely thought, though inferior to that of Christians, still too good for men who attached importance to the law of Moses after the coming of Christ. On the contrary, a term of reproach seems to have been sought after; which was found in the appellation Ebionites, denoting *poverty*,† whether bodily or mentally; and the following appears to me to have been the *immediate occasion* of its application to the Jewish Christians. We learn from several Fathers that there was a man among the Jewish Christians of the name of Ebion, who distinguished himself not a little. He was probably a violent partisan, who, coming among the Gentile believers, gave them annoyance by the boldness of his language about the importance of the Mosaic rites; and also concerning the proper humanity of Jesus Christ, from which the Gentile Christians had, in his time, *begun* to deviate, though it were only in a small degree. Now the Gentile Christians would very likely, as I conceive, when Ebion thus attracted their notice, be apt to call the Jewish Christian party, from which he had sprung, and whose views he was defending, *persons like him*, *persons like this Ebion*, whose name signified *poor*,‡ a very proper appellation for a party adhering to the "beggarly elements" § of the law, and which did not entertain sufficiently high notions (in the view of the Gentile believers) concerning Christ. In short, the Gentile believers would be disposed, as I think, to call the Jewish Christians *Ebionites*, without meaning to say that Ebion was the *founder* of a sect, or *father* of a heresy; an inference which is far too sweeping, though it serves the purpose of Trinitarian writers *sometimes* to draw it.

Thus far with a conjecture about the origin of a name; let me come to my *proofs*, which is a thing of more importance. According to strict arrangement, I ought first to identify by

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* Acts xi. 26.

† See the quotations from Origen and Eusebius, at pages 86 – 89.

‡ Ibid. § Galatians iv. 9.

proof the name of Ebionites with that of the Jewish Christians; and then, secondly, to show that those who were Ebionites held the proper Unitarian doctrine. But several of the passages which I shall quote go to establish both of these things at once; and there is also a citation from Origen which will bring before us the Unitarianism of the Jewish Christians *directly*, without the intervention of the term Ebionites. In consequence of these two circumstances, I [p. 74] prefer to proceed with my quotations after the order of chronology; leaving it to my readers to decide whether my evidence, taken as a whole, will be satisfactory.

Irenæus, A. D. 178. In the first book of his treatise against heretics, he has a particular chapter on the "Doctrine of the Ebionites,"* in which he describes their error as consisting in an adherence to the Jewish law, notwithstanding their belief in Christ.† We hence learn that he means by Ebionites at least *some* Jewish Christians; and the doctrine of these concerning Christ is discovered by the following passages. Irenæus says that the "spiritual disciple" will judge various classes of men who hold incorrect doctrine, and among these the Ebionites: "He will judge the *Ebionites;* how can they be saved, unless he who wrought their salvation upon earth was God?—And how can Christ have had more than Solomon and more than Jonah, and have been the Lord of David, if it be said that he was of the *same substance with them?*"‡ "The *Ebionites* are vain, not acknowledging through faith the union of God and man (in the person of Christ), nor being willing to understand how the Holy Spirit came upon Mary."§

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* Quæ est Ebionitarum Doctrina. Lib. I. cap. 26.

† Qui autem dicuntur Ebionæi consentiunt quidem mundum a Deo factum, ea autem quæ sunt erga Dominum non similiter ut Cerinthus et Carpocrates opinantur. Solo autem eo quod est secundum Matthæum Evangelio utuntur, et apostolum Paulum recusant, apostatum eum legis dicentes. Quæ autem sunt prophetica curiosius exponere nituntur, et circumciduntur ac perseverant in his consuetudinibus quæ sunt secundum legum, et Judaico charactere vitae uti, et Hierosolymam adorant, quasi domus Dei. Lib. I. cap. 26.

‡ Judicabit autem et Ebionitas; quomodo possunt salvari, nisi deus est, qui salutem illorum super terram operatus est? — Quomodo autem plusquam Salomon, aut plusquam Iona habebat, et dominus erat David, qui ejusdem cum ipsis fuit substantiæ? Lib. IV. cap. 59.

§ Vani autem et Ebionæi, unitionem dei et hominis per fidem non recipientes in suam animam; neque intelligere volentes, quoniam spiritus sanctus advenit in Maria. Lib. V.

"Such an interpretation is incorrect, viz. that a young woman shall conceive and bring forth a son, as Theodotion of Ephesus and Aquila of Pontus interpret; whom the *Ebionites* following, say that Christ was begotten of Joseph." *

Tertullian, A. D. 200. Tertullian does not mention the Ebionites, but he speaks of the doctrine of Ebion; and it is quite common with this writer to put the name of a distinguished individual and his doctrine for that of the name and doctrine of the party to which he belonged. Nor is it [p. 73] necessary that we should infer, from the connection by Tertullian of the name of Ebion with the doctrine of the proper humanity of Christ, that he was the *author* of that doctrine, as some would have it.† Otherwise we should be obliged also to infer, from Tertullian's connecting the same name with the defence of legal observances, that Ebion was the *first* advocate for the Mosaic law among Christians, an opinion which our acquaintance with the Acts of the Apostles would, of course, overturn. The passage in Tertullian which connects the name of Ebion with the observance and defence of the Mosaic law is as follows. "And in his Epistle to the Galatians Paul declaims against those who were observers and defenders of circumcision and of the law; this is the heresy of *Ebion*." ‡ But this was *not* the heresy of Ebion *alone*, or as having him for its *author*. In like manner we must judge with respect to those passages which connect Ebion's name with the doctrine of Christ's strict humanity. "This opinion," says Tertullian, "might accord very well with the sentiment of *Ebion*, who declared Christ to have been merely a man, of the race of David." § "Now that I may answer," he again says, "candidly: the Son of God could not have been begotten in the ordinary way of men, unless he was altogether a son of

* Non ergo vera est quorundam interpretatio, qui ita audent interpretari scripturam: Ecce adolescentula in ventre habebit, et pariet filium, quemadmodum et Theodotion Ephesius est interpretatus, et Aquila Ponticus, utrique Judæi proselyti, quos sectati Ebionæi, ex Joseph generatum eum dicunt. Lib. III. cap. 24.

† Dr. Jamieson's Vindication, in reply to Priestley, Vol. II. p. 47 et seq.

‡ Et ad Galatas scribens, invehitur in observatores et defensores circumcisionis et legis: Hebionis hæresis est. De Præ. Hæret. cap. 33.

§ Poterit hæc opinio Hebioni convenire, qui nudum hominem, et tantum ex semine David, id est, non et Dei filium, constituit Jesum. De Carne Christi, cap. 14.

man, having nothing more (in substance) than Solomon or Jonah; which would be to coincide in opinion with *Ebion.*"* But Ebion has no claim as the inventor of the doctrine ascribed to him in these passages, any more than in the first passage, where he is made the defender of the Mosaic law. The three passages just prove that Ebion, who was a Jewish Christian adhering to the law, was also a believer in the strict humanity of Christ; indicating thus (according to Tertullian's manner) the faith of the body of men to which he belonged.

Origen, A. D. 230. The testimony of this Father is most explicit and satisfactory, leaving no room to doubt that all the Jewish Christians were, according to his knowledge, properly Unitarians. In the following passage the Jewish believers are introduced to our notice without the name of Ebionites. "And when you consider," he says, "what belief THEY OF THE JEWISH RACE WHO BELIEVE IN JESUS entertain of the Saviour, some [p. 76] thinking that he took his being from Mary and Joseph, and others indeed from Mary only and the Divine Spirit, but still *without any belief of his divinity*, you will understand," &c.† Origen adds no information concerning any Jewish Christians who *did* believe Christ's deity. We learn from this passage, that the Jewish Christians must have begun to be, according to Origen's information, of *two* classes, (which they are not known to have been before,) some believing and others disbelieving the miraculous conception, but both of them ignorant of the deity of Christ. This new distinction should be borne in mind, for it will explain some things which will very soon follow. It is a distinction which is again presented to us in another passage, where the Jewish Christians are introduced, and are called Ebionites. "But some of the Jews," Origen says, "believed in Jesus, and in consequence boasted to be Christians; and yet they were willing to live after the manner of the Jewish law. These are the

* Nunc ut simplicius respondeamus, non computebat ex semine humano Dei filium nasci, ne si totus esset filius hominis, non esset et Dei filius, nihilque haberet amplius Salomone et amplius Iona, et de Hebionis opinione credendus erat. De Carne Christi, cap. 18.

† This is very nearly the translation by Dr. Horsley. Tracts, p. 85. — Καὶ ἐπὰν ἴδῃς τῶν ἀπὸ Ἰουδαίων πιστευόντων εἰς τὸν Ἰησοῦν τὴν περὶ τοῦ σωτῆρος πίστιν, ὅτε μὲν ἐκ Μαρίας καὶ Ἰωσὴφ οἰομένων αὐτὸν εἶναι, ὅτε μὲν ἐκ Μαρίας μόνης καὶ τοῦ θείου πνεύματος, οὐ μὴν καὶ μετὰ τῆς περὶ αὐτοῦ θεολογίας, ὄψει, κ. τ. λ. Com. in Matt. sect. 161.

two sorts of *Ebionites*, who either, like ourselves, confess Jesus born of a virgin, or think that he was not born in that manner, but like other men." * The same distinction is again hinted at in a passage where Origen speaks of certain sectaries whom he calls "the Ebionites of *both* kinds." † That Origen, when mentioning the Ebionites, meant *all* the Jewish Christian body, will be evident from the following passage, which, on being attended to, will incline us to attach the greater importance both to what this Father himself has just said above, and also to what had been stated before by Irenæus and Tertullian on the subject of the Ebionites and the doctrine of Ebion. "THEY OF THE JEWS WHO BELIEVE IN CHRIST," says Origen, "have not abandoned the law of their ancestors; for they live according to it; bearing a name which corresponds with the poor expectations which the law holds out. For a beggar is called among the Jews (that is, in the Hebrew language) Ebion. AND THEY OF THE JEWS WHO HAVE RECEIVED JESUS AS THE CHRIST go by the name of EBIONITES." ‡ [p. 77] Whatever, then, had been said before concerning Ebion and the Ebionites, may be conceived, according to this view of Origen, as having been true of the general body of Jewish Christians; that is, that by the testimony of Irenæus, and by an inference from Tertullian, they believed Christ to be altogether like other men in substance; and that by the testimony of Origen they must have *become* of *two* sorts, some believing and others disbelieving the miraculous conception, but both denying the deity of Christ.

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* Ἔστωσαν δέ τινες καὶ τὸν Ἰησοῦν ἀποδεχομένοι, ὡς παρὰ τοῦτο Χριστιανοὶ εἶναι αὐχοῦντες, ἔτι δὲ κατὰ τὸν Ἰουδαίων νόμον ὡς τὰ Ἰουδαίων πλήθη βιοῦν ἐθελόντες. Οὗτοι δὲ εἰσὶν οἱ δίττοι Ἐβιωναῖοι, ἤτοι ἐκ παρθένου ὁμολογοῦντες ὁμοιῶς ἡμῖν τὸν Ἰησοῦν, ἢ οὐκ οὕτω γεγενῆσθαι, ἀλλ' ὡς τοὺς λοίπους ἀνθρώπους. Contra Celsum.

† Εἰσί γὰρ τινες αἱρεσεις τὰς Παύλου ἐπιστολὰς τοῦ ἀποστόλου μὴ προσιεμέναι, ὥσπερ Ἐβιωναῖοι ἀμφοτέροι. In Celsum, Lib. VI. p. 274.

‡ This is Dr. Horsley's own translation. Tracts, p. 170. The learned polemic, in order to get rid of the evidence of this last passage, had the hardihood to tax Origen with *falsehood* (Tracts, p. 173), which was the occasion of much controversy with Dr. Priestley. — Οἱ ἀπὸ Ἰουδαίων εἰς Ἰησοῦν πιστευόντες οὐ καταλελοίπασι τὸν πάτριον νόμον, βιοῦσι γὰρ κατ' αὐτὸν, ἐπωνύμοι τῆς κατὰ τὴν ἐκδόχην πτωχείας τοῦ νόμου γεγενημένοι· Ἐβίων τε γὰρ ὁ πτώχος παρὰ Ἰουδαίοις καλεῖται, καὶ Ἐβιωναῖοι χρηματίζουσιν οἱ ἀπὸ Ἰουδαίων τὸν Ἰησοῦν ὡς Χρίστον παραδεξαμένοι. In Celsum, Lib. II. p. 56.

Eusebius, A. D. 315. In the testimony of Eusebius we have that of a professed ecclesiastical historian, and one of the most distinguished men of his time. As he lived, too, (page 26,) in Palestine, he was not far from the residence of the Jewish Christians, and therefore he was well qualified to judge concerning them. The first passage which I shall quote from him contains a declaration of the identity of Unitarianism with the name of Ebionites, and also evidence of the very high *antiquity* of this name. "The early heralds of our Saviour," he says, "called those *Ebionites*, which in the Hebrew language signifies poor, who, not denying the body of Christ, showed their folly in denying his divinity." * In the following passage Eusebius seems to allude to only one class of Ebionites, namely, those who, according to Origen's division, disbelieved the miraculous conception. "This," he says, "was the interpretation of Theodotion of Ephesus, and of Aquila from Pontus, — whom the *Ebionites* following, maintain that Christ was begotten by Joseph." † But in the next passage, which indeed constitutes the greater part of a complete chapter on the Ebionites, we have a full account of them, of their twofold division, being the same with that of Origen, and of their adherence to the law of Moses. "Others," he says, "whom a malignant demon was not able to turn away from the plan of God with regard to Christ, yet, because he found them weak in some respects, he reduced them into his power. These were rightly called *Ebionites* by the ancients, as those who think meanly concerning Christ. For they considered him to be merely a man, like other men, but approved on account of his excellence in virtue, being the son of Joseph and Mary. And they thought that it was altogether necessary that they should observe the ceremonies of the law. Others again, called by the *same name*, fled from the absurd opinion of the former, not denying that the Lord was born of Mary and the Holy Spirit. [p. 78] But still, not allowing that he pre-existed as God, the

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* Καὶ αὐτοῦ δὲ τοῦ Σώτηρος ἡμῶν οἱ πρωτοκήρυκες Ἐβιωναίους ὠνόμαζον, Ἑβραικῇ φωνῇ πτώχους· τὴν δὲ ἄνοιαν ἀποκαλοῦντες, τοὺς ἕνα μὲν Θεὸν λεγόντας εἰδέναι, καὶ τοῦ σώτηρος τὸ σῶμα μὴ ἀρνουμένους, τὴν δὲ τοῦ υἱοῦ θεότητα μὴ εἰδότας. Ec. Theol., Lib. I cap 14.

† Ὡς Θεοδοτίων ἡρμήνευσεν ὁ Ἐφέσιος, καὶ Ἀκύλας ὁ Πόντικος, ἀμφοτέροι Ἰουδαῖοι προσηλύτοι· οἷς κατακολουθησάντες οἱ Ἐβιωναῖοι, ἐξ Ἰωσὴφ αὐτὸν γεγεννῆσθαι φασκούσι. Hist. Lib. V. cap 8.

Word, and Wisdom, they were drawn into the impiety of the first; especially in that they made it an object to observe the law. They (that is, both parties) kept the Sabbath, and other Jewish customs. But on the Lord's days they acted in a similar manner with us, in remembrance of the resurrection of the Lord." * This I consider to be a very clear description of the Jewish Christians under the name of Ebionites; from which it is evident that none of them believed Christ's deity.

The Jewish Christian Separatists under the Names of EBIONITES *and* NAZARENES.

The occurrence of the name of *Nazarenes* in connection with the history of the Jewish separatists for the *first* time in a writer so late as Epiphanius (who flourished about A. D. 368), creates several questions. First, was this name the designation of a different class, among these separatists, from the Ebionites already mentioned? This is what such men as Dr. Horsley think, and would be glad to have the means of proving, since it furnishes them with an opportunity of forming *conjectures* concerning the orthodoxy of this (supposed) *different* class, in regard to the doctrine of the Trinity. But the probability of this notion is destroyed, not only by the *silence* of the more ancient writers as to the existence of a Nazarene sect differing from the Ebionites as they understood them, but

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* Ἄλλους δὲ ὁ πόνηρος δαίμων τῆς περὶ τὸν Χριστὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ διαθεσέως ἀδυνάτων ἐκσείσαι, θατεραλήπτους εὗρων ἐσφετερίζετο. Ἐβιωναίους τούτους οἰκειῶς ἐπεφήμιζον οἱ πρῶτοι πτωχῶς καὶ ταπεινῶς τὰ περὶ τοῦ Χρίστου δοξαζόντας· λίτον μὲν γὰρ αὐτὸν καὶ κοίνον ἤγουντο κατὰ προκόπην ἤθους αὐτὸν μόνον ἄνθρωπον δεδικαιώμενον ἐξ ἀνδρὸς τὲ κοινωνίας καὶ τῆς Μαρίας γεγενήμενον· δεῖν δὲ πάντως αὐτοῖς τῆς νομίκης θρησκείας, ὡς μὴ ἂν διὰ μόνης τῆς εἰς τὸν Χρίστον πιστέως καὶ τοῦ κατ' αὐτὴν βιοῦ σωθησομένοις. Ἄλλοι δὲ παρὰ τούτους τῆς αὐτῆς ὄντες προσηγορίας, τὴν μὲν τῶν εἰρημένων ἔκτοπον διεδίδρασκον ἀτόπιαν, ἐκ παρθένου καὶ τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος μὴ ἀρνουμένοι γεγονέναι τὸν κύριον· οὐ μὴν ἐθ' ὁμοιῶς καὶ οὗτοι προυπάρχειν αὐτὸν Θεὸν λόγον ὄντα καὶ σοφίαν ὁμολογοῦντες, τῇ τῶν προτέρων περιετρέποντο δυσσεβείᾳ· μάλιστα ὅτε καὶ τὴν σωματίκην περὶ τὸν νόμον λατρείαν ὁμοιῶς ἐκεινοῖς περιέπειν ἐσπούδαζον·—καὶ τὸ μὲν Σάββατον καὶ τὴν Ἰουδαίκην ἄλλην ἀγώγην ὁμοιῶς ἐκεινοῖς παρεφύλαττον. Ταῖς δ' αὖ κυριάκαις ἡμέραις, ἡμῖν τὰ παραπλήσια εἰς μνήμην τῆς τοῦ κυρίου ἀναστασέως ἐπετέλουν· ὅθεν παρὰ τὴν τοιαύτην ἐγχείρησιν τῆς τοίασδε λελόγχασι πρυσηγορίας, τοῦ Ἐβιωναίων ὀνόματος, τὴν τῆς διανοίας πτωχείαν αὐτῶν ὑποφαίνοντος· ταύτην γὰρ ἐπίκλην ὁ πτώχος παρ' Ἑβραίοις ὀνομάζεται. Hist. Lib. III. cap. 27.

also by the express evidence, which we have seen, that the term Ebionites was the name for the Jewish Christian separatists *in general*, and that the Jewish Christians, (so Origen has declared without using any particular name,) whether they believed or disbelieved the miraculous conception, *agreed in the denial of the divinity of Jesus Christ.* Nor is there anything which is at variance with this in later history. In the second place, then, was the term Nazarenes just another name for the *whole body* of Jewish Christians? To this I answer, that the *Jews* called *all* the converts to Christianity Nazarenes, and most probably those of their own race [p. 79] in particular. But at the same time the later Christian Fathers, such as Epiphanius, Jerome, &c., following the notions prevalent among those of their own class in their time, have made *two distinct sects* of Jewish Christians, the Ebionites and Nazarenes, not however as if the latter believed the deity of Christ. So that this second question must be answered in the negative, as far as ecclesiastical testimony is concerned; and it is of this that I am speaking.

In the third place, then, was the term Nazarenes another name for a *part* of the old body of Ebionites, the other *part* still retaining the first appellation? This appears to me to be the most probable solution. It seems, to my apprehension, that that portion of the former Ebionites which was described by Origen and Eusebius as believing the miraculous conception, was that also which Epiphanius and others have called Nazarenes. Nor only so, but I think that those persons were thus called, in order that they might be distinguished from the other class, the name of Nazarenes having, as I conceive, been allowed *at last* by the Gentile Christians in order to create this distinction, though it was at *first* denied to the general body of separatists, as too favorable for adherents to the ceremonies of the law. That this is likely to have been the truth of the matter, and that, at all events, there was no class of Jewish Christians of whom it can be proved from the *later* writers that they believed in the deity of Christ, I hope to show in four propositions, under which, as they succeed each other, will be ranked all the remaining ecclesiastical evidence which I think it necessary to cite on this subject.

1. Epiphanius, who has given to the Nazarenes and Ebionites a separate chapter for each, representing them as distinct sects, is scarcely able to find even the same difference, and

certainly not a greater difference, between them, concerning the person of Christ, than what had been before stated by Origen and Eusebius as existing between the two classes of Ebionites. While he says of Ebion, that "he maintained that Christ was begotten by a man, even Joseph,"* all that he can declare more concerning those whom he calls Nazarenes amounts to this, that he is not quite certain whether they were of the same opinion, or believed the miraculous conception. "Concerning Christ," says Epiphanius, "I cannot say with certainty whether they, too, (the Nazarenes,) carried away with the impiety of the aforementioned Cerinthus and Merinthus, think him a mere man, or affirm, as the truth is, that he was begotten of Mary by the Holy Spirit."† According to Epiphanius, the Nazarenes "took their origin [p. 80] after the destruction of Jerusalem, when all the disciples lived at Pella; Christ himself having warned them to leave Jerusalem at the approach of the siege";‡ and afterwards he states that "Ebion lived *contemporaneously* with them (the Nazarenes), and set out from the same source."§ Moreover, Epiphanius places both parties, viz. the Ebionites and Nazarenes, together in that list of heretics whom he considered St. John to have found it necessary to confute by the publication of his Gospel.‖

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* Τὰ πρώτα δὲ ἐκ παρατρίβης καὶ σπέρματος ἄνδρος, τουτεστὶν τοῦ Ἰωσὴφ, τὸν Χρίστον γεγενήσθαι ἔλεγεν. Hær. 30, p. 125.

† Περὶ Χρίστου δὲ οὐκ οἶδα εἴπειν εἰ καὶ αὗτοι τῇ τῶν προσειρημένων περὶ Κηρίνθου καὶ Μηρίνθου μοχθηρίᾳ ἀχθέντες, ψίλον ἄνθρωπον νομίζουσιν, ἢ καθὼς ἡ ἀληθεία ἔχει, διὰ πνεύματος ἁγίου γεγενήσθαι ἐκ Μαρίας διαβεβαιοῦνται. Hær. 29, p. 123.

‡ Ἐκείθεν μὲν ἡ ἀρχὴ γέγονε μετὰ τὴν ἀπὸ τῶν Ἱεροσολύμων μετάστασιν, πάντων τῶν μαθήτων τῶν ἐν Πάλλῃ ᾠκηκότων, Χριστοῦ φήσαντος καταλείψαι τὰ Ἱεροσόλυμα. καὶ ἀναχωρῆσαι, ἐπείδη ἔμελλε πάσχειν πολιορκίαν· καὶ ἐκ τῆς ταυτῆς ὑποθεσέως τὴν Πέραιαν ᾠκησάντες, ἔκεισε ὡς ἔφην διέτριβον· ἐντεῦθεν ἡ κατὰ τοὺς Ναζωραίους αἵρεσις εἶχε τὴν ἀρχήν. Hær. 29, p. 123.

§ Οὗτος γὰρ ὁ Ἐβίων σύγχρονος μὲν τούτων ὑπῆρχεν, ἀπ' αὐτῶν δὲ σὺν αὐτοῖς ὁρμάται. Hær. 30, p. 125.

‖ Διὸ καὶ Ἰωάννης ἔλθων ὁ μακάριος, καὶ εὗρων τοὺς ἀνθρώπους ἠσχολημένους περὶ τὴν κατὰ Χριστοῦ παρουσίαν, καὶ τῶν Ἐβιωναίων πλανηθέντων διὰ τὴν ἔνσαρκον Χριστοῦ γενεαλογίαν, ἀπὸ Ἀβραάμ καταγομένην, καὶ Λούκα ἀναγομένην ἀχρὶ τοῦ Ἀδάμ — καὶ τοῦς Ναζαραίους, καὶ ἄλλας πόλλας αἱρέσεις. Hær. 60, p. 747.

2. Jerome is so far from thinking that any important distinction should be made between the Nazarenes and Ebionites, that, though *he also* considers them as separate sects, he does not scruple to refer to the one party as explanatory of the other, in one instance. It is true that this instance was a case where their common adherence to the law of Moses formed the feature of likeness; but this does not entirely remove the notion which we are apt to form of their being otherwise very little distinguished from each other, when Jerome connects them together after the following manner: "What shall I say of the *Ebionites*, who profess themselves to be Christians? There is to this very day, in all the synagogues of the East, a heresy among the Jews, called that of the Minei, even till now condemned by the Pharisees, and commonly called *Nazarenes*, who believe in Christ the Son of God, born of the Virgin Mary, and say that it was he who suffered under Pontius Pilate and rose again, in whom we also believe. But while they wish to be both Jews and Christians, they are neither Jews nor Christians."* From this passage it appears that Jerome wished to speak of the *Ebionites* as persons who adhered to the Jewish law; but that on further reflection he refers rather to the case of those whom he introduces as *Nazarenes*, as being much the same; making no distinction between the two parties, except that he speaks of the latter as believing [p. 81] the miraculous conception, which is just what Origen and Eusebius have said of the second class of Ebionites.

3. It appears that, if those of the Jewish Christians who believed the miraculous conception (that is, as I should say, if the second class of Ebionites) *obtained* the title of Nazarenes, the other class, who did *not* acknowledge any miraculous conception (that is, as I should say, the first class of Ebionites) *sought* to obtain the same appellation of Nazarenes, and *did* actually obtain it to some extent. This makes it likely that the name of Nazarenes was only a title which was in the

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* Quid dicam de Hebionitis, qui Christianos esse simulant? Usque hodie per totas orientis synagogas inter Judæos hæresis est, qui dicitur Mineorum, et à Pharisæis nunc usque damnatur, quos vulgo Nazaræos nuncupant, qui credunt in Christum filium Dei, natum de virgine Maria, et eum dicunt esse qui sub Pontio Pilato passus est, et resurrexit, in quem et nos credimus; sed dum volunt et Judæi esse et Christiani, nec Judæi sunt nec Christiani. Opera, Vol. I. p. 634.

course of being gradually yielded *at last* to all the Jewish Christians, though in fact the first class of Ebionites did not succeed in acquiring it beyond a certain limit. We read in Austin of Jewish Christians to whom, without any reserve, was accorded the name of Nazarenes. We read also of others who were called sometimes Nazarenes, and otherwise Symmachians. Now Symmachus was an Ebionite, and of the first class,* — a distinguished man, who translated the Old Testament into Greek, as we are informed by various of the ancients; nor only so, but who wrote to "prove his doctrine, contending about the Gospel of Matthew." † From him came the term Symmachians, given to those Jewish Christians who believed that Jesus Christ was strictly a man, as we are told by Ambrose. "The Symmachians," he says, "are those who, while they observe the law, profess to be Christians, describing Christ as not God and man, but as man only." ‡ It is concerning these *Symmachian* Ebionites that Austin gives us information, that they partially obtained the title of Nazarenes. "And now," he says, "there are certain heretics who call themselves Nazarenes, but by some are called Symmachians, who practise the circumcision of Jews and the baptism of Christians." § Again he says: "If any one of the Nazarenes, whom others call Symmachians, shall object," &c. — "These are they whom Faustus has mentioned under the name of Symmachians or Nazarenes, who exist in small numbers even to our day." ‖

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* "Symmachus," says Eusebius, "was an Ebionite, and the heresy of the Ebionites consists in believing that Christ was the offspring of Joseph and of Mary." *Τῶν δὲ μὴν ἑρμηνεύτων αὐτῶν δὴ τούτων ἱστέον Ἐβιωναίον τὸν Σύμμαχον γεγονέναι· αἵρεσις δὲ ἐστὶν ἡ τῶν Ἐβιωναίων οὑτὼ καλουμένη τῶν τὸν Χρίστον ἐξ Ἰωσὴφ καὶ Μαρίας γεγονέναι φασκόντων.* Hist. Lib. VI. cap. 17.

† *Καὶ ὑπομνήματα δὲ τοῦ Συμμάχου εἰσετὶ νῦν φερέται· ἐν οἷς δόκει πρὸς τὸ κατὰ Ματθαίον ἀποτεινόμενος εὐαγγέλιον, τὴν δεδηλωμένην αἵρεσιν κρατύνειν.* Ibid.

‡ Sicut et Symmachiani qui ex Pharisæis originem trahunt, qui, servata omni lege, Christianos se dicunt, more Photini Christum non Deum et hominem sed hominem tantummodo definientes. Prol. Com. in Galat.

§ Et nunc sunt quidam hæretici, qui se Nazarenos vocant, a nonnullis autem Symmachiani appellantur, et circumcisionem habent Judæorum, et baptismum Christianorum. Cont. Cresconium, Lib. I.

‖ Et tamen hoc si mihi Nazaræorum objiceret quisquam quos alii Symmachianos appellant, etc. — Hoc igitur temperamentum modera-

[p. 82] 4. The description which Theodoret has given of those whom he calls Nazarenes is, that they believed in Christ as a righteous man. "The Nazarenes," he says, "are Jews who honor Christ as a righteous man." * As Theodoret here does not limit the name of Nazarenes by any additional term, as that of Symmachians, we cannot understand him as referring to any other class of persons than those who *commonly* received the former name, thus identifying these with the disbelief of the deity of Christ; though I do not think he prevents us from conjecturing that they believed the miraculous conception, in conformity with a former statement by Jerome.

To all this let it be added, that Trinitarian divines, who have often made the attempt, have never yet succeeded in showing that the Nazarenes went farther in opinion concerning Christ than the belief of the miraculous conception. On the whole, therefore, I conclude that the faith of the general body of ancient Jewish Christians, so far as their history is known, was Unitarianism; that they were free from those errors concerning the Deity, and the person of Christ, into which the Gentile Christians were led by those philosophical prejudices which were explained at the beginning of this chapter.

And here I think of bringing my narrative to a close, having already extended it beyond my intention when I commenced writing. To my readers, if they are inquirers for the primitive religion of Jesus Christ, I would now recommend, before parting, the study, primarily and especially, of Christ's own sermons and example, as recorded in the four evangelical histories. Or if it be thought that the Apostles, after Christ's ascension, and the effusion of the spiritual influence of God on them, were directed by him to teach more fully and explicitly concerning the things which were connected with his kingdom, I would request a serious attention, after the four

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menque spiritus sancti per apostolos operantis, cum displicuisset quibusdam ex circumcisione credentibus, qui hæc non intelligebant, in ea perversitate manserunt, ut et gentes cogerent judaizare. Ii sunt quos Faustus Symmachianorum vel Nazaræorum nomine commemoravit, qui usque ad nostra tempora jam quidem in exigua, sed adhuc tamen in ipsa paucitate perdurant. Cont. Faust. Lib. XIX.

* Οἱ δὲ Ναζωραῖοι Ἰουδαῖοι εἰσὶ, τὸν Χρίστον τιμῶντες ὡς ἄνθρωπον δικαίον. Hær. Fab., Lib. II. cap. 2.

Gospels, to the book of Acts of the Apostles. The study of these five books in a leisurely manner would prepare the way for a better knowledge of the other parts of the New Testament than these last can furnish by themselves, especially when they are taken, as is often the case, in detached and disconnected parts. The book of Acts is an invaluable history, furnishing a sufficient detail of the doctrine and practice of the Church of Christ, when it was under the superintendence of Peter and James and John and Paul, men of honest hearts, of undivided piety, [p. 83] firmness, composure, benevolent enterprise, whose names will be long remembered and loved, when the philosophizing corrupters of the truth will have found very few to uphold their memory. The book of Acts contains an account of upwards of fifteen sermons and speeches delivered on public and private occasions by those pillars of the ancient faith. I will venture to say, that in none of these sermons and speeches, nor in any of the other words of the first teachers recorded in the Acts, will there be found (except in two misunderstood passages) * any countenance to the notion of the deity of Christ. The Apostles have invariably described their Lord as a *man*, whom God predicted, whom God anointed, whom God raised from the dead, whom he made a Prince and a Saviour, and through whom he offered the forgiveness of sins. Christ is introduced to us as a *man*, even in his highest office, that of judge of the human race; for God (so declared Paul at Athens) "will judge the world in righteousness by that *man* whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men in that he hath raised him from the dead." Acts xvii. 31. It is this very MAN whom Paul preached, and not the pre-existing subordinate divinity of Justin Martyr, or the second person of the perfect Trinity of the Athanasian creed, that I seek to acknowledge as the Saviour of the world by God's appointment. Nor in this way do I derogate from Christ any of his real honors, which he

* Acts vii. 59. "And they stoned Stephen, calling upon [God] and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." The word "God" is an *addition* in the English translation; when removed, the verse will read, "And they stoned Stephen, calling upon and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." Acts xx. 28. For "feed the church of [God], which he hath purchased with his own blood," read, according to the emendation of Griesbach, on the authority of the best manuscripts, "feed the church of the Lord," that is, the Lord Jesus Christ.

achieved by an unbroken course of obedience to his Heavenly Father's will, in the midst of suffering and privation. By no means; no more, in fact, than the Apostle, who, whilst he represented Christ to his auditors as a *man*, mentioned also, as we have seen, that God will employ him in passing judgment upon the world. I, indeed, honor Christ's precepts as the voice of God. I look back with pleasure on his hallowed life, as the clear mirror of Heaven's own greatness, and of Heaven's own love. The recollection of Christ's ignominious death is my antidote against the evils of life. And the hope of immortality, which his resurrection has secured, is what bends my heart, when tired of the world's vanities, to the consolations of a better age. It is through the name of Christ as the Son of God's *affection* (I know nothing about an eternal *generation*), — it is through the name of Christ as the ambassador of peace to men, who at his coming (and too often since) were following the strange devices of their own hearts, — that I humbly confess the sins which I have committed against the laws of the [p. 84] Eternal Ruler. And it is because *one man's righteousness* has been associated with the affairs of men, so as to make the human race altogether a more pleasing object of contemplation to the Divine Being, that I am the more satisfied of what my reason otherwise dictates, that God will forgive all men their trespasses if they forgive one another. And I believe, in conclusion, that God *will* actually judge the world in righteousness by him whom, having already tried, he hath found to be complete, even Jesus Christ. From that judgment the oppressor of human weakness, the corrupter of innocence, and the malignant, envious poisoner of social happiness, will not escape with impunity.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES.

Page 17.

Since writing the paragraph which introduces the Second or Semi-Trinitarian period, in Chapter II., I have had occasion to consult various of the ancient authorities there referred to, in addition to some others which I had before examined. In the course of this labor I carefully compared more than *half* the amount of Latin and Greek quotations in this pamphlet with the places in the works from which they were taken, finding them invariably to be correct. And if my time and means had permitted, I should have gone over all the others in the same way.

Pages 27 – 29.

My reason for placing Athanasius at the *end* of the Semi-Trinitarian period of Church History, rather than at the *beginning* of the third period, did not arise out of an idle wish to prolong the former epoch beyond its real limit. But the passages which I produced from Athanasius give evident supremacy to the Father Almighty. Athanasius is said to have adhered to the Nicene Creed (what I call the Semi-Trinitarian) to the end of his life, desiring no better exposition of his faith. And those who have been well qualified to judge of his writings have declared that the opinions of a later age, entertained by Jerome, Austin, Chrysostom, and others, concerning the absolute coequality in all respects of the three persons of the Trinity, went so far beyond what they conceive to have been the doctrine of Athanasius, that they cannot believe that he himself would have given the later opinions countenance. That Athanasius went a great length in *zeal* for the Trinity in a very high form, cannot be denied. Yet *zeal* was a common quality in those times. Were not the Arians *zealous?*

Were not the Semi-Arians *zealous?* Were not all the parties who then divided the Church instigated by *zeal?*

PAGES 21 – 23, and 34, 35.

In the two latter pages I introduced a passage from Tertullian, where he acknowledges that the great mass of believers in his time objected to the doctrine of the Trinity, calling out for the Monarchy or Divine Unity. I mentioned that this extract was taken from a book which Tertullian wrote against Praxeas, a Unitarian, whose name is again noticed at page 47. It is from the same work that the evidence is taken at pages 21 – 23, showing that Tertullian himself (though he was the opponent of Praxeas) believed in the decided inferiority of Christ, as a divine person, to his Father. I wish to add, that the whole of the work against Praxeas is an admirable proof, not only of the zeal of Praxeas's party for the doctrine of the unity of God, but also of the hesitation of Tertullian to depart from that cardinal truth. If Praxeas objected to the Trinity as a "*division* of the unity," Tertullian labored to the utmost of his power to acquit himself of the charge of *dividing.* He repeats again and again that the Son is only an executor of the father's will, and that the Monarchy, which belonged naturally to God, is only wielded by the Son, through God's permission; and that the same is the case with regard to the Holy Spirit. Tertullian declares that he is a defender of the Divine Monarchy, but with this reservation, that he does not see any reason why that Monarchy should not be administered by whomsoever *it* wills (per quos velit administrare); for no monarchy, he says, is so close that it may not be administered by such proximate persons as it may choose for its *officials* (atquin nullam dico dominationem ita unius sui esse, ita singularem, ita monarchiam, ut non etiam per alias proximas personas administretur, quas ipsa prospexerit officiales sibi). Though God, he says, should allow his Son to participate in his Monarchy, the Monarchy still belongs *principally* to him who communicated it to the other (sed proinde illius esse principaliter a quo communicatur in filium). The Divine Monarchy, he goes on to say, is administered by the angels (si — per tot legiones et exercitus angelorum administratur); why not, then, by the Son and Spirit? (Quale est ut Deus divisionem et dispersionem pati videatur in Filio et in Spiritu Sancto, secundum et tertium sortitis locum — quas non patitur in tot

angelorum numero?) "But I," he says, "who derive the Son from no other original than the substance of the FATHER, supposing him to do nothing but by the *will* of the FATHER, and to have received all his power *from* the FATHER, how is it that I destroy the belief of the (Divine) Monarchy which I preserve in the Son, being *delivered* by the FATHER to him?" (See pages 21 – 23.)

But more than this: Tertullian maintains that the Son must *restore* his administration of the Monarchy ultimately to the Father, according to Paul's declaration, "*Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to* GOD, *even the* FATHER." "Though a Trinity," he says, "is connected with the Monarchy, the Monarchy nevertheless remains *unaltered*, so that the Son may be prepared to restore it to the FATHER, as we learn from Paul, writing concerning the last end, where he says (1 Cor. xv. 24, 26, 28): 'When he shall have delivered up the kingdom to GOD, even the FATHER. For he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall he also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that GOD may be all in all.' So that we see that the Son is not an obstruction to the Monarchy, though it is lodged with him to-day, because it remains in the Son *unaltered*, and will be restored *unaltered* to the FATHER. By admitting the Son (to a participation of the Monarchy), we do not detract from the Monarchy, because it has been *delivered* to the Son by the FATHER, and will, some time hence, be *restored* to the FATHER by the Son." (Adeo autem manet in suo statu, licet Trinitas inferatur, ut etiam restitui habeat Patri a filio; si quidem Apostolus scribit de ultimo fine cum tradiderit regnum Deo et Patri. Oportet enim eum regnare usque dum ponat inimicos ejus Deus sub pedes ipsius. — Cum autem subjecta erunt illi omnia, utique absque eo qui ei subjecit omnia, tunc et ipse subjicietur illi, qui ei subjecit omnia, ut sit Deus omnia in omnibus. Videmus igitur non obesse monarchiæ filium etsi hodie apud filium est, quia et in suo statu est apud filium, et cum suo statu restituetur Patri a filio. Ita eam nemo hoc nomine destruet, si filium admittat, cui et traditam eam a Patre et a quo quandoque restituendam a Patre constat.)

Tertullian continues to point out the vast distinction between the FATHER of all, and his Son, particularly in the fifteenth section of his book. He declares concerning the Son, speaking

of him as a *whole*, without any quibble about a doubleness of nature, that he is a divinity *visible*, and capable of entering into *conversation* with men, while GOD the FATHER is altogether *invisible*. He says that it was not concerning the Son, but concerning the FATHER, that Paul wrote when he speaks of Him "who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen, nor can see," (1 Tim. vi. 16,) and whom he also calls, in the same Epistle (i. 17), "the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God." (Ostendit et de Patre autem ad Timotheum, quem nemo vidit hominum, sed nec videre potest. Exaggerans amplius, qui solus habet immortalitatem, et lucem habitat inaccessibilem; de quo et supra dixerat, Regi autem seculorum immortali, invisibili, soli Deo.) On the other hand, the Son is described, Tertullian says, as *visible*, as possessing *mortality* and *accessibility* (ut et contrario ipsi filio adscriberemus mortalitatem, accessibilitatem), as having been seen in his glory by Paul himself. In summing up his thoughts in this part of his work, Tertullian declares that "the Son always appeared, and (that) the Son always conversed, and (that) the Son always acted by the *authority* and *will* of the FATHER; because the Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the FATHER do." (See page 22.)

PAGE 42.

The first introduction (by Flavianus of Antioch) of the form of praise, "to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit," is thus mentioned by Mr. Gibbon (Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, Vol. III. pp. 388, 389): "The Catholics might prove to the world that they were not involved in the guilt and heresy of their ecclesiastical governor by publicly testifying their dissent, or by totally separating themselves from his communion. The first of these methods was invented at Antioch, and practised with such success, that it was soon diffused over the Christian world. The doxology, or sacred hymn, which celebrates the glory of the Trinity, is susceptible of very nice, but material inflexions; and the substance of an orthodox or an heretical creed may be expressed by the difference of a disjunctive or a copulative particle. Alternate responses and a more regular psalmody were introduced into the public service by Flavianus and Diodorus, two devout and active laymen, who were attached to the Nicene faith. Under

their conduct, a swarm of monks issued from the adjacent desert, bands of well-disciplined singers were stationed in the cathedral of Antioch, the Glory to the Father, AND the Son, AND the Holy Ghost, was triumphantly chanted by a full chorus of voices; and the Catholics insulted, by the purity of their doctrine, the Arian prelate who had usurped the throne of the venerable Eustathius."

PAGES 66, 67.

In the view which I have given of the Gnostic opinions concerning Christ, I have been confirmed by a very clear description of them in Principal Hill's Lectures on Divinity, Vol. II. pp. 249, 250.

PAGES 74–80.

Mr. Gibbon was fully aware of the connection of Platonism with the interpretation of Scripture in the second and succeeding centuries. What was his ultimate and sincere opinion concerning the influence of Plato's writings in the formation of the Christian Trinity, or whether he had closely *searched* the subject so as to form a *sufficient* opinion on it, I do not know. In some places he seems to adopt, as it were by hypothesis, the notion that Plato and St. John were the joint authors of Trinitarianism. In other places he uses a different style of language, as if the Trinity had been only a *remote* deduction from Plato and the Scriptures. "The respectable name of Plato," he says, "was used by the orthodox and abused by the heretics, as the common support of truth and error; the authority of his skilful commentators, and the science of dialectics, were employed to justify the *remote* consequences of his opinions, and to supply the *discreet silence* of the inspired writers. The same subtile and profound questions concerning the nature, the generation, the distinction, and the equality of the three divine persons of the mysterious *Triad* or *Trinity* were agitated in the philosophical and in the Christian schools of Alexandria." Decline and Fall, Vol. III. p. 321.

PAGE 81, &c.

Mr. Gibbon also mentions the Unitarian faith of the Ebionites and Nazarenes. I shall here quote what he has said, not so much in way of *authority*, but on account of the notice of

this important subject in so popular a history as that of the *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire:* "The faith of the Ebionites, perhaps of the Nazarenes, was gross and imperfect. They revered Jesus as the greatest of the Prophets, endowed with supernatural virtue and power. They ascribed to his person and to his future reign all the predictions of the Hebrew oracles which relate to the spiritual and everlasting kingdom of the promised Messiah. Some of them might confess that he was born of a virgin; but they obstinately rejected the preceding existence and divine perfections of the Logos (Word) or Son of God." Vol. III. p. 319.

INDEX.

Alcinous, 76.
Alexander, 6.
Alphonse de Vargas, 4 n.
Ambrose, 53, 93.
Ammonius Saccas, 78.
Anaxagoras, 74.
Apuleius, 76.
Aquila, 85, 88.
Arius, 6, 7, 43.
Arnobius, 25.
Artemon, 43, 44 – 46, 47.
Artemonites, 46.
Athanasius, 6, 7, 27 – 28, 38 – 39, 47, 97. — Was not the author of the Athanasian Creed, 8.
Athenagoras, 79.
Augustine or Austin, 29 – 30, 53, 74, 81, 93, 97.
Aurelian, 48.
Austin. See Augustine.

Barnabas, 12.
Basil, 30, 41.
Bonosus, 51.
Bull, Bishop, 29.

Campbell, 57 n.
Cerinthians, 67 n.
Cerinthus, 53, 63, 67, 91.
Chrysostom, 30, 54, 74, 97.
Cicero, 76.
Clarke, Samuel, 17.
Clement of Alexandria, 21, 74, 79.
Clement of Rome, 12, 13 – 15.
Council of Antioch, 48, 50.
" " Chalcedon, 10, 11.
" " Constantinople, 4.
" " Ephesus, 10, 11.
Council of Jerusalem, 7.
" " Nice, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 15 n., 49.
" " Sardica, 49.
" " Sirmium, 50.
Creed, The Apostles', 1 – 3; its Unitarianism lamented, 3 n. – 4 n.
Creed, The Nicene, 4 – 7.
" The Athanasian, 7 – 9.
Creeds, The Three, 1 – 9.
Cudworth, 78, 79.

Damasus, 31.
Diodorus, 100.
Dionysius of Alexandria, 79.
Docetes, 67.

Ebion, 64, 83, 85, 86.
Ebionites, 53, 81, 82 – 89, 89 – 94.
Enfield, 76 n.
Epiphanius, 48, 53, 60, 61, 81, 89, 90 – 91.
Eusebius, 26 – 27, 40, 45, 81, 88 – 89, 93 n.
Eustathius, 101.
Eutyches, 10.

Faustus, 93.
Flavianus, 42, 100.

Gibbon, 100 – 101, 101 – 102.
Gnostics, 61 – 63, 64, 65, 66.
Gregory Nazianzen, 30, 42.
Gregory Thaumaturgus, 79.

Hermas, 12.
Hilary, 8.
Hippolytus, 60.

Horsley, 36, 64, 65, 66, 79 – 80, 87 n., 89.

Ignatius, 13.
Irenæus, 2, 19 – 21, 63, 64, 68 – 69, 79, 81, 84 – 85.

Jamblichus, 78.
Jerome, 30, 53, 81, 90, 92, 97.
Jewish Christians, 80 – 94, 101 – 102.
John, why called the Divine, 55.
John's Gospel, 51, 62 – 63.
" First Epistle, 52, 64 – 70.
Jortin, 29.
Julian, the Emperor, 50.
Jurieu, 29.
Justin Martyr, 18 – 19, 32 – 34, 45, 74, 79.

Lactantius, 25 – 26, 79.
Lardner, 8, 46 n., 49, 57.
Lindsey, 18, 32.

Marcellus, 40, 43, 49, 50, 60.
Merinthus, 91.
Michaelis, 62.
Minei, 92.
Mosheim, 2, 10, 13.

Nazarenes, 81, 82, 83, 89 – 94, 101 – 102.
Nestorius, 10.
Nicolaitans, 63.
Noetus, 44, 47, 48, 60.
Novatian, 24 – 25, 39.

Origen, 17 n., 23 – 24, 36 – 38, 39, 52, 79, 81, 84, 86 – 87.
Orpheus, 80.

Parmenides, 80.
Patropassians, 47.
Paul of Samosata, 39, 43, 46, 48 – 49, 60.
Paulians or Paulicians, 49.
Paulinus, 55
Philostorgius, 42.
Photinus, 43, 49, 50, 60, 61.
Photius, 15 n.
Plato, 75 – 77, 78, 79, 80, 101.
Platonic Philosophy, 74.
Plotinus, 78.
Polycarp, 12, 16 – 17, 63.
Porphyry, 78.
Praxeas, 34, 36, 44, 47, 60, 98.
Priestley, 17, 18, 32, 40, 65.
Proclus, 78.
Pythagoras, 80.

Recognitions, 79.

Sabellians, 48.
Sabellius, 44, 47, 48, 60.
Sabians, 63.
Socrates, 74.
Symmachians, 93.
Symmachus, 93.

Tatian, 79.
Tertullian, 21 – 23, 34 – 36, 52, 60, 64, 79, 85 – 86, 98 – 100.
Theodoret, 31, 81, 94.
Theodotians, 46.
Theodotion, 85, 88.
Theodotus, 43, 44 – 46, 47.
Theophylact, 55.

Valentinian, 50.
Victor, 45.
Vigilius of Tapsa, 8.
Vincent of Lerins, 50 n.

Wakefield, 13 n.
Washington, 58.

Zenobia, 48.
Zephyrinus, 45.

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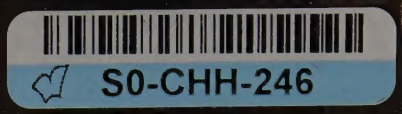
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